



~~THE DEED~~

✂ *THIS Play is, agreeable to ACT OF  
PARLIAMENT, entered in the Hall Book  
of the Company of Stationers, and who-  
ever presumes to print it will be prosecuted.  
— The Proprietors will reward any one  
who will give Information of such Pro-  
ceeding.*

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643.2.2  
FALSE DELICACY: 2

A  
COMEDY;

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE  
THEATRE-ROYAL  
IN  
DRURY-LANE.  
BY HIS MAJESTY'S SERVANTS.

---

By HUGH KELLY. R.

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L O N D O N,  
P R I N T E D F O R  
R. BALDWIN, No. 47, PATER-NOSTER-ROW;  
W. JOHNSTON, No. 16, and G. KEARSLY,  
No. 1, in LUDGATE-STREET.  
MDCCCLXVIII.

FALSE DELICACY

*W. Muggerave.*

COMEDY

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL

IN

DURHAM

BY HIS MAJESTY'S SERVANTS

By HUGH KELLY

LONDON

PRINTED FOR

R. BALDWIN, No. 15, FLEET STREET, LONDON.

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And at the Theatre Royal, Durham.

MDCCLXXIII.



T O

DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

Dear SIR,

**I** HAVE two motives for inscribing this piece to you, gratitude and vanity; gratitude, because it's success has been greatly owing to your judicious advice; and vanity, because I wish to acquaint the world that such a character as Mr. Garrick, has been warmly the friend of his sincerely affectionate,

Middle Temple,  
Jan. 29, 1768.

*And very much obliged,*

*Humble Servant,*

HUGH KELLY.

DAVID GARRICK

Dear Sir,

I HAVE two motives for writing this  
piece to you, gratitude and vanity; grati-  
tude, because it's success has been greatly  
owing to your judicious advice; and vanity,  
because I wish to engrain the world that such  
a character as Mr. Garrick, has been recently  
the friend of his country's affectionate.

And very much obliged,

Humble servant,

HUGH KELLY.

Middle Temple  
Jan. 29. 1763.

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# PROLOGUE,

Written by DAVID GARRICK, Esq. \*

Spoken by Mr. KING.

**I**'M vex'd—quite vex'd—and you'll be vex'd—that's worse;  
To deal with stubborn scribblers! there's the curse!  
Write moral plays—the blockhead!—why, good people,  
You'll soon expect this house to wear a steeple!  
For our fine piece, to let you into facts,  
Is quite a Sermon,—only preach'd in Acts.  
You'll scarce believe me, 'till the proof appears,  
But even I, Tom Fool, must shed some tears:  
Do, Ladies, look upon me—nay, no simp'ring—  
Think you this face was ever made for whim'ring?  
Can I, a cambrick handkerchief display,—  
Thump my unfeeling breast, and roar away?  
Why this is comical, perhaps he'll say—  
Resolving this strange awkward bard to pump,  
I ask'd him what he meant?—He somewhat plump,  
New purs'd his belly, and his lips thus biting,  
I must keep up the dignity of writing!  
You may, but, if you do, Sir, I must tell ye,  
You'll not keep up that dignity of belly;  
Still he preach'd on.—“Bards of a former age  
Held up abandon'd pictures on the stage,  
Spread out their wit, with fascinating art,  
And catch'd the fancy, to corrupt the heart;  
But happy change!—in these more moral days,  
You cannot sport with virtue, even in plays;  
On virtue's side, his pen the poet draws,  
And boldly asks a hearing for his cause.”  
Thus did he prance, and swell.—The man may prate,  
And feed these whimsies in his adde pate,  
That you'll protect his muse, because she's good,  
A virgin, and so chaste!—O Lud! O Lud!  
No muse the Critic Beadle's lash escapes,  
Though virtuous, if a dowdy, and a trapes:  
If his come forth, a decent likely Lass,  
You'll speak her fair, and grant the proper pass;  
Or should his brain be turn'd with wild pretences;  
In three hours time, you'll bring him to his senses;  
And well you may, when in your power you get him,  
In that short space, you blister, bleed, and sweat him.  
Among the Turks, indeed, he'd run no danger,  
They sacred hold a madman, and a stranger.

\* Mr. Kelly originally intended the prologue to be grave, and accordingly wrote a serious one himself; but as Mr. King was to speak it, Mr. Garrick, with great propriety, thought a piece of humour would be best suited to the talents of that excellent actor, and therefore very kindly took the trouble of putting it into a form so entirely different from the first, that it cannot, with the least justice, be attributed to any other author.

*PREFACE*  
*Written by David Garrick, Esq.*  
*Spoken by Mr. K. N. G.*  
*and others.*

## Dramatis Personæ.

|                                     |                        |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Colonel Rivers.</i>              | <i>Mr. HOLLAND.</i>    |
| <i>Cecil,</i>                       | <i>Mr. KING.</i>       |
| <i>Sir Harry Newburg,</i>           | <i>Mr. J. PALMER.</i>  |
| <i>Lord Winworth,</i>               | <i>Mr. REDDISH.</i>    |
| <i>Sidney,</i>                      | <i>Mr. CAUTHERLY.</i>  |
| <i>Footmen, Mr. Wright, &amp;c.</i> |                        |
| <i>Lady Betty Lambton,</i>          | <i>Mrs. ABINGTON.</i>  |
| <i>Miss Marchmont,</i>              | <i>Mrs. BADDELEY.</i>  |
| <i>Miss Rivers,</i>                 | <i>Mrs. JEFFERIES.</i> |
| <i>Mrs. Harley,</i>                 | <i>Mrs. DANCER.</i>    |
| <i>Sally. Miss Reynolds.</i>        |                        |

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SCENE, *Richmond.*

TIME, *The Time of Representation.*



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# FALSE DELICACY.

## ACT I. SCENE I.

*An Apartment at Lady BETTY LAMBTON'S.*

*Enter SIDNEY and WINWORTH.*

SIDNEY.

**S**TILL I can't help thinking but Lady Betty Lambton's refusal was infinitely more the result of an extraordinary delicacy, than the want of affection for your Lordship.

WINWORTH.

O my dear cousin you are very much mistaken; I am not one of those coxcombs who imagine a woman does'nt know her own mind, or who, because they are treated with civility by a lady who has rejected their addresses, suppose she is secretly debating in their favour: Lady Betty is a woman of sense, and must consequently despise coquetry or affectation.

SIDNEY.

Why she always speaks of you with the greatest respect.

B

WINWORTH.



## 2 FALSE DELICACY:

WINWORTH.

Respect! — Why she always speaks of you with the greatest respect; does it therefore follow that she loves you? No Charles — I have, for some time you know, ceas'd to trouble Lady Betty with my solicitations, and I see myself honour'd with her friendship, though I hav'nt been so happy as to merit her heart; for this reason I have no doubt of her assistance on the present occasion, and I am certain I shall please her by making my addresses to Miss Marchmont.

SIDNEY.

Miss Marchmont is indeed a very deserving young woman.

WINWORTH.

Next to Lady Betty I never saw one so form'd to my wishes; besides, during the whole period of my fruitless attendance, she seemed so interested for my success, and express'd so hearty a concern for my disappointment, that I have consider'd her with an eye of more than common friendship ever since. — But what's the matter with you Charles, you seem to have something upon your spirits?

SIDNEY.

Indeed my Lord you are mistaken, I am only attentive.

WINWORTH.

O, is that all! — This very day I purpose to request Lady Betty's interest with Miss Marchmont, for unhappily circumstanc'd as she is, with regard to fortune, she possesses an uncommon share of delicacy, and may possibly think herself  
insulted

A C O M E D Y. 3

insulted by the offer of a rejected heart; — Lady Betty in that case will save her the pain of a supposed disrespect, and me the mortification of a new repulse. But I beg your pardon, Charles, I am forgetting the cause of friendship, and shall now step up stairs to Colonel Rivers about your affair. — Ah Sidney you have no difficulties to obstruct the completion of your wishes, and a few days must make you one of the happiest men in England. [Exit.]

SIDNEY. [looking after him.]

A few days make me one of the happiest men in England, — a likely matter truly; little does he know how I passionately admire the very woman to whom he is immediately going with an offer of his person and fortune. — The marriage with Miss Rivers I see is unavoidable, and I am almost pleased that I never obtained any encouragement from Miss Marchmont, as I should now be reduc'd to the painful alternative, either of giving up my own hopes, or of opposing the happiness of such a friend.

Enter Mrs. HARLEY and Miss MARCHMONT.

Mrs. HARLEY.

O here my dear girl is the sweet swain in *propria persona*: — Only mind what a funeral sermon-face the creature has, notwithstanding the agreeable prospects before him. — Well of all things in the world defend me I say from a sober husband!

SIDNEY.

You are extremely welcome Mrs. Harley to divert yourself —



#### 4 FALSE DELICACY:

Mrs. HARLEY.

He speaks too in as melancholy a tone as a passing bell: — Lord, lord, what can Colonel Rivers see in the wretch to think of him for a son-in-law. — Only look Miss Marchmont at this love-exciting countenance; — Observe the Cupids that ambush in these eyes; — These lips to be sure are fraught with the honey of Hybla: — Go you lifeless devil you, — go try to get a little animation into this unfortunate face of yours.

SIDNEY.

Upon my word my face is very much oblig'd to you.

Miss MARCHMONT.

You are a mad creature, my dear, and yet I envy your spirits prodigiously.

Mrs. HARLEY.

And so you ought. — But for all that you and Lady Betty are unaccountably fond of those half-foul'd fellows, who are as mechanically regular as so many pieces of clock-work, and never strike above once an hour upon a new observation — who are so sentimental, and so dull — so wise and so drowsy. — Why I thought Lady Betty had already a sufficient quantity of lead in her family without taking in this lump to increase the weight of it.

Miss MARCHMONT.

What can she possibly mean, Mr. Sidney.

SIDNEY.

'Tis impossible to guess madam. The lively widow will still have her laugh without sparing any body.

Mrs.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Why surely, my dear, you can't forget the counter part of poor dismal here, that elaborate piece of dignified dulness, Lady Betty's cousin Lord Hectic; who through downright fondness is continually plaguing his poor wife, and rendering her the most miserable woman in the world, from an extraordinary desire of promoting her happiness.

Miss MARCHMONT.

And is'nt there a great deal to say in extenuation of an error which proceeds from a principle of real affection?

Mrs. HARLEY.

Affection! ridiculous! but you shall have an instance of this wonderful affection: — T'other day I din'd at his house, and, though the weather was intollerably warm, the table was laid in a close room, with a fire large enough to roast an ox for a country corporation.

SIDNEY.

Well, and so —

Mrs. HARLEY.

In a great chair, near the fire side, sat poor Lady Hectic, wrapp'd up in as many fur cloaks as would baffle the severity of a winter in Siberia: — On my entrance I express'd a proper concern for her illness, and ask'd the nature of her complaint. — She told me she complain'd of nothing but the weight of her dress, and the intollerable heat of the apartment; adding, that she had been caught in a little shower the preceding



## 6 FALSE DELICACY:

ceding evening, which terrified Lord Hectic out of his wits, and so for fear she might run the chance of a slight cold, he exposed her to the hazard of absolute suffocation.

SIDNEY.

Upon my word, Miss Marchmont, she has a pretty manner of turning things.

Miss MARCHMONT.

Really I think so.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Well — unable to bear either the tyranny of this preposterous fondness any longer, or the intollerable heat of his room, I made my escape the moment the cloth was removed, and shan't be surpris'd if before the conclusion of the summer, he is brought before his peers for having murdered his poor lady out of downright affection.

SIDNEY.

A very uncommon death, Mrs. Harley, among people of quality.

*Enter a FOOTMAN.*

FOOTMAN to SIDNEY.

Lord Winworth, Sir, desires the favour of your company above: the person is come with the writings from the Temple—

SIDNEY.

I'll wait upon him immediately.

Mrs.

A C O M E D Y. 7

Mrs. HARLEY.

Ay pray do, you are the fittest company in the world for each other. — If Colonel Rivers was of my mind he'd turn you instantly adrift and listen to the overtures of Sir Harry Newburg.

SIDNEY.

I really believe you have a fancy to me yourself, you're so constantly abusing me. [Exit.]

Mrs. HARLEY.

I, you odious creature!

Miss MARCHMONT.

Now you mention Sir Harry, my dear, isn't it rather extraordinary for him to think about Miss Rivers, when he knows of the engagements between her and Mr. Sidney — especially as her father has such an objection to the wildness of his character.

Mrs. HARLEY.

What you are still at your sober reflections I see, and are for scrutinizing into the morals of a lover. — The women truly would have a fine time of it if they were never to be married till they found men of unexceptionable characters.

Miss MARCHMONT.

Nay I don't want to lessen Sir Harry's merit in the least, — he has his good qualities as well as his faults — and is no way destitute of understanding — but still his understanding is a fashionable one, and pleads the knowledge of every thing right, to justify the practice of many things not strictly warrantable.

Mrs.



## 8 FALSE DELICACY:

Mrs. HARLEY.

Why I never heard any thing to his prejudice but some fashionable liberties which he has taken with the ladies.

Miss MARCHMONT.

And in the name of wonder what wou'd you desire to hear?

Mrs. HARLEY.

Come, come, Hortensia, we women are unaccountable creatures, the greatest number of us by much love a fellow for having a little modish wildness about him, and if we are such fools as to be captivated with the vices of the men, we ought to be punished for the depravity of our sentiments.

*Enter RIVERS and Lady BETTY.*

RIVERS.

I tell you sister they can read the parchments very well without our assistance — and I have been so fatigu'd with looking over papers all the morning, that I am heartily sick of your Indentures, witnessing, your forasmuch's, likewise's also's, moreover's and notwithstanding's, and I must take a turn in the garden to recover myself. [*Exit.*]

Lady BETTY.

Nay I only spoke because I imagin'd our being present would be more agreeable to Lord Winworth. — But I wonder Sir Harry does'nt come, he promised to be here by ten, and I want to see his cousin Cecil mightily.

Miss.

A COMEDY. 9

Miss MARCHMONT.

What, Lady Betty, does Mr. Cecil come with him here this morning?

Lady BETTY.

He does, my dear — he arrived at Sir Harry's last night, and I want to see if his late journey to France has any way improved the elegance of his appearance. *[ironically.]*

Mrs. HARLEY.

Well, I shall be glad to see him too; for, notwithstanding his disregard of dress, and freedom of manner — there is a something right in him that pleases me prodigiously.

Miss MARCHMONT.

A something right, Mrs. Harley! — he is one of the worthiest creatures in the world.

Lady BETTY.

O, Hortensia, he ought to be a favourite of yours, for I don't know any body who possesses a higher place in his good opinion.

Miss MARCHMONT.

'Twou'd be odd, indeed, if he was'nt a favourite of mine — he was my father's best friend; — gave him a considerable living you know, and, when he died, wou'd have provided very kindly for me, if your generosity, Lady Betty, had'nt render'd his goodness wholly unnecessary.

Lady BETTY.

Pooh! Pooh! no more of this.

Mrs. HARLEY.

wish there was a possibility of making him dress like a gentleman — But I am glad he comes

C

with



10 FALSE DELICACY:

with Sir Harry ; — for though they have a great regard for each other, they are continually wrangling, and form a contrast which is often extremely diverting —

*Enter a Footman.*

Sir Harry Newburg and Mr. Cecil, Madam.

Lady BETTY.

O, here they are! Shew them in. [*Exit Footm.*

Mrs. HARLEY.

Now for it!

Miss MARCHMONT.

Hush, they are here.

Sir HARRY.

Ladies your most obedient. —

CECIL.

Ah, Girls! — give me a kiss each of you instantly. — Lady Betty, I am heartily glad to see you: — I have a budget full of compliments for you, from several of your friends at Paris —

Lady BETTY.

Did you meet any of them at Paris?

CECIL.

I did, — and, what was worse, I met them in every town I passed through; — but the English are a great commercial nation, you know, and their fools like their broad cloths, are exported in large quantities to all parts of Europe.

Sir

A C O M E D Y. 11

Sir HARRY.

What? and they found you a fool so much above the market price, that they have returned you upon the hands of your country? — Here, ladies, is a head for you, piping hot from Paris.

CECIL.

And here, ladies, is a head for you, like the Alps.

Sir HARRY.

Like the Alps, ladies! How do you make that out?

CECIL.

Why it's always white, and always barren: 'tis constantly covered with snow, but never produces any thing profitable.

Mrs. HARLEY.

O say no more upon that head, I beseech you.

Lady BETTY.

Indeed, Sir Harry, I think they're too hard for you.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Why, I think so too — especially my friend Cecil, who, with that unfortunate shock of hair, has no great right to be considered as a standard for dress in this country.

CECIL.

Ah, widow, there are many heads in this country with much more extraordinary things upon them than my unfortunate shock of hair, as you call it: — what do you think of these wings, for instance, that cover the ears of my cousin Mercury?



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Sir HARRY.

Death ! don't spoil my hair.

CECIL.

You see this fellow is so tortur'd upon the wheel of fashion, that a single touch immediately throws him into agonies ; — now, my dress is as easy as it's simple, and five minutes —

Sir HARRY.

With the help of your five fingers equips you at any time for the drawing-room, — ha ! ha ! ha !

CECIL.

And is'nt it better than being five hours under the paws of your hair-dresser ?

Lady BETTY.

But custom, Mr. Cecil ! —

CECIL.

Men of sense have nothing to do with custom, and 'tis more their business to set wise examples than to follow foolish ones.

Mrs. HARLEY.

But don't you think the world will be apt to laugh a little, Mr. Cecil ?

CECIL.

I can't help the want of understanding among mankind.

Sir HARRY.

The blockhead thinks there's nothing due to the general opinion of one's country.

CECIL.

And none but blockheads like you would mind the foolish opinions of any country. Lady

Lady BETTY.

Well! Mr. Cecil must take his own way, I think — so come along, ladies, — let us go into the garden, and send my brother to Sir Harry to settle the business about Theodora.

CECIL.

Theodora! — what a charming name for the romance of a circulating library. — I wonder, Lady Betty, your brother wou'd'nt call his girl Deborah, after her grandmother —?

Mrs. HARLEY.

Deborah! — O I should hate such an old fashioned name abominably —

CECIL.

And I hate this new fashion of calling our children by pompous appellations. — By and by we shan't have a Ralph or a Roger, a Bridget or an Alice remaining in the kingdom. — The dregs of the people have adopted this unaccountable custom, and a fellow who keeps a little ale-house at the bottom of my avenue in the country, has no less than an Augustus-Frederick, a Scipio Africanus, and a Matilda-Wilhelmina-Leonora, in his family.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Upon my word, a very pretty string of christian names.

Lady BETTY.

Well, Sir Harry, you and Mr. Cecil dine with us. — Come, ladies, let us go to the garden.

Mrs. HARLEY.

I positively won't go without Mr. Cecil, for I must have somebody to laugh at.

CECIL.



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CECIL.

And so must I, widow, therefore I won't lose this opportunity of being in your company.

[*Exeunt ladies and followed by CECIL, who meets RIVERS entering.*]

CECIL.

Ah, Colonel, I am heartily glad to see you. —

RIVERS.

My dear Cecil, you are welcome home again.

CECIL.

There's my wise kinsman wants a word with you. [Exit.]

Sir HARRY.

Colonel, your most obedient : — I am come upon the old business ; — for unless I am allow'd to entertain hope of Miss Rivers, I shall be the most miserable of human beings.

RIVERS.

Sir Harry, I have already told you by letter, and I now tell you personally, I cannot listen to your proposals.

Sir HARRY.

No, Sir ?

RIVERS.

No, Sir, — I have promised my daughter to Mr. Sidney ; — do you know that, Sir ?

Sir HARRY.

I do ; — but what then ? Engagements of this kind, you know —

RIVERS.

So then, you do know I have promised her to Mr. Sidney ?

Sir

Sir HARRY.

I do; — but I also know that matters are not finally settled between Mr. Sidney and you, and I moreover know, that his fortune is by no means equal to mine, therefore —

RIVERS.

Sir Harry, let me ask you one question before you make your consequence.

Sir HARRY.

A thousand if you please, Sir.

RIVERS.

Why then, Sir, let me ask you, what you have ever observed in me or my conduct, that you desire me so familiarly to break my word: — I thought, Sir, you considered me as a man of honour.

Sir HARRY.

And so I do, Sir, a man of the nicest honour.

RIVERS.

And yet, Sir, you ask me to violate the sanctity of my word — and tell me indirectly that it is my interest to be a rascal —

Sir HARRY.

I really don't understand you, Colonel: — I thought, when I was talking to you I was talking to a man who knew the world — and as you have not yet signed —

RIVERS.

Why, this is mending matters with a witness! — And so you think because I am not legally bound, I am under no necessity of keeping my word! — Sir Harry, laws were never made for men of honour; — they want no bond but the rectitude



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rectitude of their own sentiments, and laws are of no use but to bind the villains of society.

Sir HARRY.

Well ! but my dear Colonel, if you have no regard for me, shew some little regard for your daughter.

RIVERS.

Sir Harry, I shew the greatest regard for my daughter by giving her to a man of honour ; — and I must not be insulted with any farther repetition of your proposals.

Sir HARRY.

Insult you Colonel ! — is the offer of my alliance an insult ? — is my readiness to make what settlements you think proper —

RIVERS.

Sir Harry, I should consider the offer of a kingdom an insult, if it was to be purchased by the violation of my word : — Besides, though my daughter shall never go a beggar to the arms of her husband, I wou'd rather see her happy than rich ; and if she has enough to provide handsomely for a young family, and something to spare for the exigencies of a worthy friend, I shall think her as affluent as if she was mistress of Mexico.

Sir HARRY.

Well, Colonel, I have done ; — but I believe —

RIVERS.

Well, Sir Harry, and as our conference is done, we will, if you please, retire to the ladies : — I shall be always glad of your acquaintance though I can't receive you as a son-in-law, — for a union of interest I look upon as a union of dishonour, and consider a marriage for money, at best, but a legal prostitution.

[*Exeunt.*]

*End of the first Act.*

ACT

## A C T II.

SCENE *a Garden.*

*Enter Lady BETTY, and Mrs. HARLEY.*

Mrs. HARLEY.

LORD, Lord, my dear you're enough to drive one out of one's wits. — I tell you, again and again, he's as much yours as ever; and was I in your situation, he shou'd be my husband to-morrow morning.

Lady BETTY.

Dear Emmy you mistake the matter strangely. — Lord Winworth is no common man, nor wou'd he have continued his silence so long upon his favourite subject, if he had the least inclination to renew his addresses. — His pride has justly taken the alarm at my insensibility, and he will not, I am satisfied, run the hazard of another refusal.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Why then, in the name of wonder, if he was so dear to you, cou'd you prodigally trifle with your own happiness, and repeatedly refuse him?

Lady BETTY.

I have repeatedly told you because I was a fool, Emmy. — Till he withdrew his addresses, I knew not how much I esteemed him; my unhappiness in my first marriage, you know, made me resolve against another. — And you are also sensible I have frequently argued that a woman of real delicacy shou'd never admit a second impression on her heart.

D

Mrs.



## 18 FALSE DELICACY:

Mrs. HARLEY.

Yes, and I always thought you argued very foolishly. — I am sure I ought to know, for I have been twice married; — and though I lov'd my first husband very sincerely, there was not a woman in England who cou'd have made the second a better wife. — Nay, for that matter, if another was to offer himself to-morrow, I am not altogether certain that I should refuse listening —

Lady BETTY.

You are a strange creature.

Mrs. HARLEY.

And are'nt you a much stranger, in declining to follow your own inclinations, when you cou'd have consulted them so highly, to the credit of your good sense, and the satisfaction of your whole family. — But it is'nt yet too late; and if you will be advised by me every thing shall end as happily as you can wish.

Lady BETTY.

Well, let me hear your advice.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Why this, then: — My Lord you know has requested that you wou'd indulge him with half an hour's private conversation some time this morning.

Lady BETTY.

Well!

Mrs. HARLEY.

This is a liberty he has'nt taken these three months — and he must design something by it; — now as he can design nothing but to renew his addresses, I wou'd advise you to take him

A C O M E D Y. 19

him at the very first word, for fear your delicacy, if it has time to consider, shou'd again shew you the strange impropriety of second marriages.

Lady BETTY.

But suppose this should not be his business with me?

Mrs. HARLEY.

Why then we'll go another way to work: — I, as a sanguine friend of my Lord's, can give him a distant hint of matters, exacting at the same time a promise of the most inviolable secrecy; and assuring him you wou'd never forgive me, if you had the least idea of my having acquainted him with so important a —

Lady BETTY.

And so you wou'd have me —?

Mrs. HARLEY.

Why not? — This is the very step I shou'd take myself, if I was in your situation.

Lady BETTY.

May be so: — But it's a step which I shall never take. — What! wou'd you have me lost to all feeling? Wou'd you have me meanly make use of chambermaid artifices for a husband?

Mrs. HARLEY:

I would only have you happy my dear: — And where the man of one's heart is at stake I don't think we ought to stand so rigidly upon trifles. —

Lady BETTY.

Trifles, Emmy! do you call the laws of delicacy trifles. — She that violates these —

D 2

Mrs.



20 FALSE DELICACY:

Mrs. HARLEY.

Poh! poh! she that violates: — What a work there is with you sentimental folks. — Why, don't I tell you that my Lord shall never know any thing of your concern in the design?

Lady BETTY.

But sha'nt I know it myself, Emmy! — and how can I escape the justice of my own reflections!

Mrs. HARLEY.

Well, thank heav'n my sentiments are not sufficiently refin'd to make me unhappy.

Lady BETTY.

I can't change my sentiments, my dear Emmy, — nor wou'd I, if I cou'd: — Of this, however, be certain, that unless I have Lord Winworth without courting him, I shall never have him at all. — But be silent to all the world upon this matter I conjure you: — Particularly to Miss Marchmont; for she has been so strenuous an advocate for my Lord, that the concealment of it from her might give her some doubts of my friendship; and I shou'd be continually uneasy for fear my reserve shou'd be consider'd as an indirect insult upon her circumstances.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Well, the devil take this delicacy; I don't know any thing it does besides making people miserable: — And yet some how, foolish as it is, one can't help liking it. — But yonder I see Sir Harry and Mr. Cecil.

Lady BETTY.

Let us withdraw then my dear; they may detain us; and, 'till this interview is over, I shall be

be in a continual agitation; yet I am strangely apprehensive of a disappointment, Emmy — and if —

[going]

Mrs. HARLEY.

Lady Betty.

Lady BETTY.

What do you say?

Mrs. HARLEY.

Do you still think there is any thing extremely preposterous in second marriages?

Lady BETTY.

You are intolerably provoking. — [Exeunt.]

*Enter CECIL and Sir HARRY.*

CECIL.

Well, didn't I tell you the moment you opened this affair to me, that the Colonel was a man of too much sense to give his daughter to a coxcomb?

Sir HARRY.

But what if I should tell you, that his daughter shall be still mine, and in spite of his teeth?

CECIL.

Prithee explain kinsman.

Sir HARRY.

Why suppose Miss Rivers should have no very strong objection to this unfortunate figure of mine?

CECIL.

Why even your vanity can't think that a young lady of her good sense, can possibly be in love with you?

Sir



22 FALSE DELICACY:

Sir HARRY.

What, you think that no likely circumstance I see?

CECIL.

I do really — Formerly indeed the women were fools enough to be caught by the frippery of externals, and so a fellow neither picked a pocket, nor put up with an affront, he was a dear toad — a sweet creature — and a wicked devil; — nay the wicked devil, was quite an angel of a man — and like another Alexander, in proportion to the number of wretches which he made, he constantly increased the lustre of his reputation — till at last, having conquered all his worlds, he sat down with that celebrated ruffian, and wept because he cou'd commit no farther outrages upon society.

Sir HARRY.

O my good moralizing cousin, you'll find your self cursedly out in your politics; and I shall convince you in a few hours, that a handsome suit on the back of a sprightly young fellow, will still do more among the women, than all your sentiment and slovenliness. —

CECIL.

What wou'd you persuade me that Miss Rivers will go off with you — ?

Sir HARRY.

You have hit the mark for once in your life, my sweet temper'd moulder of morality — The dear Theodora —

CECIL.

The dear Theodora! and so Harry you imagine that by the common maxims of fashionable life,

life, you may appear to be a friend to the Colonel at the very moment you are going to rob him of his daughter. — For shame kinsman — for shame — have some pride if you have no virtue — and dont smile in a man's face when you want to do him the greatest of all injuries — dont Harry —

Sir HARRY.

Cecil I scorn a base action as much as you or as much as any man — but I love Miss Rivers honourably. — I ask nothing from her father, and as her person is her own she has a right to bestow it where she pleases.

CECIL.

I am answered — her person is her own — and she has a right to be miserable her own way. — I acknowledge it — and will not discover your secret to her father. —

Sir HARRY.

Discover it to her father — why sure you woud'nt think of it. — Take care Cecil — take care — I do indeed love you better than any man in the world — and I know you have a friendship, a cordial friendship for me — but the happiness of my whole life is at stake, and must not be destroyed by any of your unaccountable peculiarities.

CECIL.

Harry — you know I wou'd at any time rather promote your happiness than obstruct it. — And you also know that if I die without children — you shall have a principal part of my fortune ; — but damn it — I wish you had not used the mask of friendship to steal this young Lady away from her relations — 'tis hard that their good nature  
must



## 24 FALSE DELICACY:

must be turned against their peace; — and hard, because her whole family treat you with regard, that you should offer them the greatest insult imaginable.

Sir HARRY.

Dear Cecil, I am more to be pitied than condemned in this transaction. — when I first endeavoured to make myself agreeable to Miss Rivers, I imagined her family would readily countenance my addresses, and when I succeeded in that endeavour, I had not time to declare myself in form, before her father entered into this engagement with Sidney. — The moment I heard it mentioned, I wrote to him, offering him a *carte blanche*, and this morning a repetition of my offer was treated with contempt. — I have therefore been forced into the measure you disapprove so much — but I hope my conduct, in the character of the son-in-law, will amply atone for any error in my behaviour as a friend.

CECIL.

Well well, we must make the best of a bad market, — her father has no right to force her inclinations; — 'tis equally cruel and unjust; therefore you may depend upon my utmost endeavours not only to assist you in carrying her off, but in appeasing all family resentments. — For really, you are so often in the wrong, that one must stand by you a little when you are in the right, — so I shall be ready for you kinsman.

Sir HARRY.

Why, Cecil, this is honest — this is really friendly — and you shall abuse me a whole twelvemonth without my answering a syllable —  
but

but for the present I must leave you — yonder I see Miss Rivers — we have some little matters to talk of — you understand me — and now —

[Exit.]

CECIL.

For a torrent of rapture and nonsense. — What egregious puppies does this unaccountable love make of young fellows: Nay, for that matter, what egregious puppies does it not make of old ones? — *ecce signum*. — 'Tis a comfort though, that no body knows I am a puppy in this respect but myself. — Here was I fancying that all the partiality I felt for poor Hortensia Marchmont, proceeded from my friendship for her father — when upon an honest examination into my own heart — I find it principally arises from my regard for herself. — I was in hopes a change of objects would have driven the baggage out of my thoughts, — and I went to France; — but I am come home with a settled resolution of asking her to marry a slovenly rascal of fifty, who is to be sure a very likely swain for a young lady to fall in love with; — but who knows — the most sensible women have sometimes strange tastes; — and yet it must be a very strange taste, that can possibly approve of my overtures. — I'll go cautiously to work however, — and solicit her as for a friend of my own age and fortune; — so that if she refuses me, which is probable enough — I shan't expose myself to her contempt. — What a ridiculous figure is an old fool sighing at the feet of a young woman. — Zounds, I wonder how the grey-headed dotards have the impudence to ask a blooming girl of twenty to throw herself away upon a moving mummy, or a walking skeleton.

[Exit.]

E

The



26 FALSE DELICACY:

*The SCENE changes to an Apartment in  
Lady BETTY's House.*

*Enter Lady BETTY and Mrs. HARLEY.*

Lady BETTY.

You can't think, Emmy, how my spirits are agitated; — I wonder what my Lord can want with me?

Mrs. HARLEY.

Well, well, try and collect yourself a little — he is just coming up, — I must retire. — Courage, my dear creature, this once — and the day's our own, I warrant you. *[Exit.]*

*Enter WINWORTH, bowing very low.*

Lady BETTY.

Here he is! — Bless me, what a flutter I am in!

WINWORTH.

Your Ladyship's most obedient.

Lady BETTY.

Won't your Lordship be seated? — He seems excessively confus'd. *[aside.]*

WINWORTH.

I have taken the liberty, Madam — How she awes me now I am alone with her! *[aside.]*

Lady BETTY.

My Lord!

WINWORTH.

I say, Madam, I have taken the liberty to —  
Lady

Lady BETTY.

I beg, my Lord, you won't consider an apology in the least —

WINWORTH.

Your Ladyship is extremely obliging — and yet I am fearful —

Lady BETTY.

I hope your Lordship will consider me as a friend, — and therefore lay aside this unnecessary ceremony.

WINWORTH.

I do consider you, Madam, as a friend; — as an inestimable friend — and I am this moment come to solicit you upon a subject of the utmost importance to my happiness.

Lady BETTY. [*aside.*]

Lord! what is he going to say?

WINWORTH.

Madam, —

Lady BETTY.

I say, my Lord, that you cannot speak to me on any subject of importance without engaging my greatest attention.

WINWORTH.

You honour me too much, Madam.

Lady BETTY.

Not in the least, my Lord — for there is not a person in the world who wishes your happiness with greater cordiality.



28 FALSE DELICACY:

WINWORTH.

You eternally oblige me, Madam — and I can now take courage to tell you, that my happiness, in a most material degree, depends upon your Ladyship.

Lady BETTY.

On me, my Lord? — Bless me!

WINWORTH.

Yes, Madam, on your Ladyship.

Lady BETTY. [*aside.*]

Mrs. Harley was right, and I shall sink with confusion.

WINWORTH.

'Tis on this business, Madam, I have taken the liberty of requesting the present interview, — and as I find your Ladyship so generously ready —

Lady BETTY.

Why, my Lord, I must confess — I say, I must acknowledge, my Lord, — that if your happiness depends upon me — I should not be very much pleas'd to see you miserable.

WINWORTH.

Your Ladyship is benignity itself; — but as I want words to express my sense of this obligation — I shall proceed at once to my request, nor trespass upon your patience by an ineffectual compliment to your generosity.

Lady BETTY.

If you please, my Lord.

WINWORTH.

Then, Madam, my request is, that I may have your consent —

Lady

A C O M E D Y. 29

Lady BETTY.

This is so sudden, my Lord! — so unexpected!

WINWORTH.

Why, Madam, it is so; — yet, if I cou'd but engage your acquiescence — I might still think of a double union on the day which makes my cousin happy —

Lady BETTY.

My Lord — I really don't know how to answer: — Does'nt your Lordship think this is rather precipitating matters?

WINWORTH.

No man, Madam, can be too speedy in promoting his happiness: — If, therefore, I might presume to hope for your concurrence — I wou'd not altogether —

Lady BETTY.

My concurrence, my Lord! — since it is so essentially necessary to your peace I cannot refuse any longer. — Your great merit will justify so immediate a compliance — and I shall stand excused of all. —

WINWORTH.

Then, Madam, I don't despair of the Lady's —

Lady BETTY.

My Lord?

WINWORTH.

I know your Ladyship can easily prevail upon her to overlook an immaterial punctilio, and therefore —

Lady BETTY.

The Lady, my Lord?

WINWORTH.



30 FALSE DELICACY:

WINWORTH.

Yes, Madam, Miss Marchmont; if she finds my addresses supported by your Ladyship, will, in all probability, be easily induced to receive them, — and then, your Ladyship knows —

Lady BETTY.

Miss Marchmont! my Lord?

WINWORTH.

Yes, Madam, Miss Marchmont. — Since your final disapprobation of those hopes which I was once presumptuous enough to entertain of calling your Ladyship mine, the anguish of a rejected passion has render'd me inconceivably wretched, and I see no way of mitigating the severity of my situation but in the esteem of this amiable woman, who knows how tenderly I have been attached to you, and whose goodness will induce her, I am well convinced, to alleviate, as much as possible, the greatness of my disappointment.

Lady BETTY.

Your Lordship is undoubtedly right in your opinion — and I am infinitely concern'd to have been the involuntary cause of uneasiness to you; — but Miss Marchmont, my Lord — she will merit your utmost —

WINWORTH.

I know she will, Madam — and it rejoices me to see you so highly pleas'd with my intention.

Lady BETTY.

O, I am quite delighted with it!

WINWORTH.

I knew I should please you by it. —

Lady

Lady BETTY.

You can't imagine how you have pleas'd me !

WINWORTH.

How noble is this goodness ! — Then, Madam, I may expect your Ladyship will be my advocate ? — The injustice which fortune has done Miss Marchmont's merit, obliges me to act with a double degree of circumspection ; — for, when virtue is unhappily plung'd into difficulties, 'tis entitled to an additional share of veneration.

Lady BETTY. [*aside.*]

How has my folly undone me !

WINWORTH.

I will not trespass any longer upon your Ladyship's leisure, than just to observe, that though I have solicited your friendship on this occasion, I must, nevertheless, beg you will not be too much my friend. — I know Miss Marchmont would make any sacrifice to oblige you ; — and if her gratitude should appear in the least concerned, — This is a nice point, my dear Lady Betty, and I must not wound the peace of any person's bosom, to recover the tranquility of my own. [*Exit.*]

*Enter Mrs. HARLEY, who speaks.*

Well, my dear, is it all over ?

Lady BETTY.

It is all over indeed, Emmy.

Mrs. HARLEY.

But why that sorrowful tone — and melancholly countenance ? Must'nt I wish you joy ?

Lady



32 FALSE DELICACY:

Lady BETTY.

O, I am the most miserable woman in the world! — Would you believe it? — The business of this interview was to request my interest in his favour with Miss Marchmont.

Mrs. HARLEY.

With Miss Marchmont! — Then there is not one atom of sincere affection in the universe.

Lady BETTY.

As to that, I have reason to think his sentiments for me are as tender as ever.

Mrs. HARLEY.

He gives you a pretty proof of his tenderness, truly, when he asks your assistance to marry another woman.

Lady BETTY.

Had you but seen his confusion, —

Mrs. HARLEY.

He might well be confused, when, after courting you these three years, he cou'd think of another, and that too at the very moment in which you were ready to oblige him.

Lady BETTY.

There has been a sort of fatality in the affair — and I am punish'd but too justly: — The woman that wants candour where she is address'd by a man of merit, wants a very essential virtue; and she who can delight in the anxiety of a worthy mind, is little to be pitied when she feels the sharpest stings of anxiety in her own.

Mrs. HARLEY,

But what do you intend to do with regard to this extraordinary request of Lord Winworth; — will you really suffer him to marry Miss Marchmont?

Lady BETTY.

Why what can I do? If it was improper for me, before I knew any thing of his design in regard to Miss Marchmont, to insinuate the least desire of hearing him again on the subject of his heart, 'tis doubly improper now, when I see he has turn'd his thoughts on another woman, and when this woman, besides, is one of my most valuable friends.

Mrs. HARLEY

Well, courage Lady Betty — we are'nt yet in a desperate situation — Miss Marchmont loves you — as herself — and woud'nt, I dare say, accept the first man in the world, if it gave you the least uneasiness. — I'll go to her therefore this very moment — tell her at once how the case is — and my life for it, her obligations to you —

Lady BETTY.

Stay, Emmy — I conjure you stay — and as you value my peace of mind be for ever silent on this subject. — Miss Marchmont has no obligations to me; — since our acquaintance I have been the only person obliged; she has given me a power of serving the worthiest young creature in the world, and so far has laid me under the greatest obligation.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Why my dear —

Lady BETTY.

But suppose I could be mean enough to think an apartment in my house, a place in my chariot, a seat at my table, and a little annuity in case of my decease, were obligations, when I continually enjoy such a happiness as her friendship and her company. — Do you think they are obligations which should make a woman of her fine

F

sense,



34 FALSE DELICACY:

sense, reject the most amiable man existing, especially in her circumstances, where he has the additional recommendation of an elevated rank and an affluent fortune: — This wou'd be exacting interest with a witness for trifles, and, instead of having any little merit to claim from my behaviour to her, I shou'd be the most inexorable of all usurers.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Well but suppose Miss Marchmont shou'd not like my Lord?

Lady BETTY.

Not like him — why will you suppose an impossibility?

Mrs. HARLEY.

But let us suppose it for argument sake.

Lady BETTY.

Why I cannot say but it would please me above all things: — For still, Emmy, I am a woman, and feel this unexpected misfortune with the keenest sensibility: — It kills me to think of his being another's, but if he must, I wou'd rather see him her's than any woman's in the universe. — But I'll talk no more upon this subject, 'till I acquaint her with his proposal; and yet, Emmy, how severe a trial must I go through.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Ay, and you most richly deserve it. [*Exeunt.*]

*End of the second ACT.*

ACT

## A C T III.

## S C E N E Lady BETTY's Garden.

Sir HARRY, Miss RIVERS and SALLY cross at the head of the stage; Colonel RIVERS observing them.

RIVERS.

I N close conversation with Sir Harry this half hour, at the remotest part of the garden. — Why, what am I to think of all this. — Does'nt she know I have refused him : — Does'nt she know herself engaged to Sidney ? — There's something mean and pitiful in suspicion : — But still there is something that alarms me in this affair ; and who knows how far the happiness of my child may be at stake. — Women, after all, are strange things ; — they have more sense than we generally allow them — but they have also more vanity. — 'Tis'nt for want of understanding they err, — but through an insatiable love of flattery. — They know very well when they are committing a fault, but destruction wears so bewitching a form, that they rebel against the sense of their own conviction — and never trouble themselves about consequences till they are actually undone. — But here they come, — I don't like this listening : — Yet the meanness of the action must for once be justified by the necessity.

[Retires behind a clump of trees.]

Enter Miss RIVERS, Sir HARRY and SALLY.

Miss RIVERS.

Indeed, Sir Harry, you upbraid me very unjustly. — I feel the refusal which my father has given you severely. — Nevertheless I must not consent to your proposal. — An elopement wou'd, I am sure,



36 FALSE DELICACY:

break his heart, — and as he is wholly ignorant of my partiality for you. — I cannot accuse him of unkindness.

RIVERS, *behind*.

So! so! so! so!

Sir HARRY.

Why then, my dear Miss Rivers, woud'nt you give me leave to mention the prepossession with which you honour me to the old Gentleman?

RIVER'S.

The old gentleman —

Miss RIVERS.

Because I was in hopes my father would have listen'd to your application, without putting me to the painful necessity of acknowledging my sentiments in your favour; and because I fear'd that unless the application was approved, on account of it's intrinsic generosity, there was nothing which cou'd possibly work upon the firmness of his temper.

RIVERS.

Well said daughter!

SALLY.

The firmness of your father's temper, madam! — The obstinacy you shou'd say! — Sir Harry, as I live and breathe, there is'nt so obstinate, so perverse, and so peevish an old devil in all England.

RIVERS.

Thank you, Mrs. Sally.

Miss RIVERS.

Sally, I insist that when you speak of my father, you always speak of him with respect. — 'Tis'nt your knowledge of secrets which shall justify these freedoms; — for I wou'd rather every thing

thing was discovered this minute than hear him mention'd with so impudent a familiarity by his servants.

SALLY.

Well Madam, I beg pardon ; — but you know the Colonel, where he once determines is never to be alter'd ; — so that call this steadiness of temper by what name you please — 'tis likely to make you miserable, unless you embrace the present opportunity, and go off, like a woman of spirit, with the object of your affections.

RIVERS.

What a damn'd jade it is !

Sir HARRY.

Indeed, my dear Miss Rivers, Sally advises you like a true friend ; — and I am satisfied your own good sense must secretly argue on her side the question. — The only alternative you have is to fly and be happy — or stay and be miserable : — You have yourself acknowledg'd my ever adorable. —

RIVERS.

O, damn your adorables !

Sir HARRY.

I say, Madam, you have yourself acknowledg'd that there is no hope whatsoever of working upon the Colonel's tenderness by acquainting him with our mutual affection : — On the contrary 'tis likely that had he the least suspicion of my being honour'd with your regard, he wou'd drag you instantly to his favourite Sidney, who is so utterly insensible of your merit, — and who, if he has a passion for any body, is, I am confident, devoted to Miss Marchmont.

RIVERS.



38 FALSE DELICACY:

RIVERS.

Why what a lye has the rascal trump'd up here against poor Sidney?

Miss RIVERS.

Dear Sir Harry, what wou'd you have me do?

RIVERS.

There! — Her dear Sir Harry!

Sir HARRY.

My ever adorable Miss Rivers —

RIVERS.

No, she can't stand these ever adorables.

Sir HARRY.

This excess of filial affection is extremely amiable: — but it ought by no means to render you forgetful of what is due to yourself. — Consider, Madam, if you have been treated with tenderness, you have repaid that tenderness with duty, and have so far discharged this mighty obligation!

RIVERS.

A pretty method of settling accounts truly!

Miss RIVERS.

Don't, my dear Sir Harry, speak in this negligent manner of my father.

RIVERS.

Kind creature!

Sir HARRY.

From what I have urg'd you must see, Madam, that though you are so ready to sacrifice your peace for your father, he sets a greater value upon a trifling promise than upon your happiness: —

Judge,

Judge, therefore, whether his repose should be dearer to you, than your own; and judge too whether to prevent the breach of his word, you shou'd vow eternal tenderness to a man you must eternally detest, and violate even your veracity to kill the object of your love?

Mrs RIVERS.

Good heav'n, what shall I do?

SALLY.

Do — Madam — go off to be sure.

RIVERS.

I'll wring that hussy's head off.

Sir HARRY.

On my knees, Madam, let me beg you will consult your own happiness, and, in your own, the happiness of your father.

RIVERS.

Ay, now he kneels, 'tis all over.

Sir HARRY.

The Colonel, Madam, has great sensibility, and the consciousness that he himself has been the cause of your unhappiness will fill him with endless regret: — Whereas, by escaping with me, the case will be utterly otherwise. — When he sees we are inseparably united, and hears with how unabating an assiduity I labour to merit the blessing of your hand, a little time will necessarily make us friends; and I have great hopes that before the end of three months we shall be the favourites of the whole family.

RIVERS.

You'll be cursedly mistaken though. —

Sir



40 FALSE DELICACY:

Sir HARRY.

But speak, my dear Miss Rivers --- speak and pronounce my fate.

Miss RIVERS.

Sir Harry you have convinced me. —

RIVERS.

Ay, I knew he wou'd. —

Miss RIVERS.

And provided you here give me a solemn assurance, that the moment we are married, you will employ every possible method of effecting a reconciliation —

Sir HARRY.

You consent to go off with me the first opportunity — a thousand thanks, my Angel, for this generous condescension, — and when —

Miss RIVERS.

There is no occasion for professions, Sir Harry, — I rely implicitly on your tenderness and your honour. —

SALLY.

Dear Madam, you have transported your poor Sally by this noble resolution.

RIVERS.

I dare say she has — but I may chance to cool your transport in a horse-pond. —

Miss RIVERS.

I am obliged to you, Sally, for the part you take in my affairs, and I purpose that you shall be the companion of my flight.

SALLY.

Shall I, Madam ! — you are too good — and I am sure I shoud'nt like to live in my old master's house, when you are out of the family.

RIVERS.

RIVERS.

Don't be uneasy on that account.

Sir HARRY.

Suffer me now, my dear Miss Rivers, since you have been thus generously kind, to inform you that a coach and six will be ready punctually at twelve, at the side of the little paddock at the back of Lady Betty's garden. — There's a close walk, you know from the garden to the place, and I'll meet you at the spot to conduct you to the coach.

Miss RIVERS.

Well, I am strangely apprehensive, — but I'll be there. — However, 'tis now high time for us to separate, — my father's eyes are generally every where — and I am impatient since it is determin'd — till our design is executed.

RIVERS.

O, I don't in the least doubt it. —

Sir HARRY.

'Till twelve then farewell my charmer. —

Miss RIVERS.

You do what you will with me. —

*[Exeunt separately.]*

RIVERS comes forward.

You do what you will with me! Why what a fool, what an idiot was I — ever to suppose I had a daughter. — From the moment of her birth — to this cursed hour, I have labour'd, I have toil'd for happiness, and now, when I fancy'd myself sure of her tend'rest affection, she casts me off for ever. — By and by, — I shall have this fellow at my feet, entreating my forgiveness, and the world will think me an unfeeling monster, if I don't give him my estate as a reward for having blasted my dearest expectations. — The world

G

will



## 42 FALSE DELICACY:

will think it strange that I shou'd not promote his felicity, because he has utterly destroyed mine; and my dutiful daughter will be surprized if the tender ties of nature are not strictly regarded in my conduct, though she has violated the most sacred of them all in her own. — Death and hell! who wou'd be a father? — There is yet one way left, — and, if that fails, — why, I never had a daughter. — [Exit.]

*The SCENE changes to an Apartment.*

*Enter Miss MARCHMONT and CECIL.*

Miss MARCHMONT.

Nay, now Sir I must tax you with unkindness, — know something that may possibly be of consequence to my welfare, — and yet decline to tell me! — Is this consistent with the usual friendship which I have met with from Mr. Cecil?

CECIL.

Look'ye, Hortensia, 'tis because I set a very great value on your esteem that I find this unwillingness to explain myself.

Miss MARCHMONT.

Indeed, Sir, you grow every moment more and more mysterious. —

CECIL.

Well then, Hortensia, if I thought you wou'dnt be offended — I —

Miss MARCHMONT.

I am sure, Sir, you will never say any thing to give me a reasonable cause of offence. — I know your kindness for me too well, Sir. —

CECIL.

Where is the need of Sirring me at every word? — I desire you will lay aside this ceremony, and  
treat

treat me with the same freedom you do every body else, — these Sirs are so cold, and so distant. —

MISS MARCHMONT.

Indeed Sir, I can't so easily lay aside my respect as you imagine, for I have long considered you as a father.

CECIL.

As a father! — but that's a light in which I don't want to be consider'd. — As a father indeed, — O she's likely to think me a proper husband for her, I can see that already. [*aside*]

MISS MARCHMONT.

Why not Sir? — your years, — your friendship for my father, and your partiality for me, sufficiently justify the propriety of my epithet. —

CECIL. [*aside.*]

My years! — Yes, I thought my years would be an invincible obstacle.

MISS MARCHMONT.

But pray Sir, — to the business upon which you wanted to speak with me: — You don't consider I am all this time upon the rack of my sex's curiosity. —

CECIL.

Why then, Hortensia, --- I will proceed to the business --- and ask you, in one word, --- if you have any disinclination to be married?

MISS MARCHMONT.

This is proceeding to business indeed Sir, — but ha -- ha --- ha! pray who have you designed me as a husband?

CECIL.

Why what do you think of a man about my age?



44 FALSE DELICACY:

Miss MARCHMONT.

Of your age Sir?

CECIL.

Yes, of my age. ---

Miss MARCHMONT.

Why, Sir, what wou'd you advise me to think of him?

CECIL.

That is'nt the question, for all your arch significance of manner, Madam.

Miss MARCHMONT.

O I am sure you wou'd never recommend him to me as a husband Sir.

CECIL.

--- So! --- and why not pray?

Miss MARCHMONT.

Because I am sure you have too great a regard for me.

CECIL.

She gives me rare encouragement. [*aside*] --- But do you imagine it impossible for such a husband to love you very tenderly?

Miss MARCHMONT.

No --- Sir, --- But do you imagine it possible for me to love him very tenderly. --- You see I have caught your own frankness Sir, --- and answer with as much ease as you question me.

CECIL. [*aside.*]

How lucky it was that I did not open myself directly to her. --- O! I should have been most purely contemptible.

Miss

Miss MARCHMONT.

But pray, Sir, — have you, in reality, any meaning by these questions? — Is there actually any body who has spoken to you on my account?

CECIL.

Hortensia, there is a fellow, a very foolish fellow, for whom I have some value, that entertains the sincerest affection for you.

Miss MARCHMONT.

Then, indeed, Sir, I am very unhappy, — for I cannot encourage the addresses of any body.

CECIL.

No?

Miss MARCHMONT.

O, Sir! I had but two friends in the world, — yourself and Lady Betty, — and I am, with justice apprehensive that neither will consider me long with any degree of regard, — Lady Betty has a proposal from Lord Winworth of the same nature with yours, in which I fear she will strongly interest herself, — and I must be under the painful necessity of disobliging you both, from an utter impossibility of listening to either of your recommendations.

CECIL.

I tell you, Hortensia, not to alarm yourself.

Miss MARCHMONT.

Dear Sir, I have always considered you with reverence, and it would make me inconceivably wretched if you imagin'd I was actuated upon this occasion by any ridiculous singularity of sentiment. — I wou'd do much to please you, — and I scarcely know what I should refuse to Lady Betty's request;



46 FALSE DELICACY:

request ; — but, Sir, though it distresses me exceedingly to discover it, — I must tell you I have not a heart to dispose of.

CECIL.

How's this ?

Miss MARCHMONT.

At the same time, I must however, tell you, that my affections are so plac'd as to make it wholly impossible for me ever to change my situation. — This acknowledgment of a prepossession, Sir, may be inconsistent with the nice reserve which is proper for my sex, — but it is necessary to justify me in a case where my gratitude might be reasonably suspected, and when I recollect to whom it is made, I hope it will be doubly entitled to an excuse.

CECIL.

Your candour, Hortensia, needs no apology, — but as you have trusted me thus far with your secret, — may'nt I know why you can have no prospect of being united to the object of your affections ?

Miss MARCHMONT.

Because, Sir, he is engaged to a most deserving young lady, and will be married to her in a few days : — In short, Mr. Sidney is the Man for whom I entertain this secret partiality : — You see, therefore, that my partiality is hopeless, — but you see, at the same time, how utterly improper it would be for me to give a lifeless hand to another while he is entirely master of my affections. — It would be a meanness of which I think myself incapable, and I should be quite unworthy the honour of any deserving hand, if, circumstanc'd in this manner, I could basely stoop to accept it.

CECIL.

C E C I L.

You interest me strangely in your story, Horatia : — But has Sidney any idea ? —

M I S S M A R C H M O N T.

None in the least. — Before the match with Miss Rivers was in agitation he made addressees to me, though privately ; and, I must own, his tenderness, join'd to his good qualities, soon gave me impressions in his favour. — But, Sir, I was a poor orphan, wholly dependant upon the generosity of others, and he was a younger brother of a family, great in his birth, but contracted in his circumstances. — What cou'd I do ? — It was not in my power to make his fortune, — and I had too much pride, or too much affection, to think of destroying it.

C E C I L.

You are a good girl, — a very good girl ; — but surely if Lady Betty knows any thing of this matter there can be no danger of her recommending Lord Winworth so earnestly to your attention. —

M I S S M A R C H M O N T.

There, Sir, is my principle misfortune. — Lady Betty is, of all persons, the least proper to be made acquainted with it. — Her heart is in the marriage between Miss Rivers and Mr. Sidney ; and, had she the least idea of my sentiments for him, or of his inclination for me, I am positive it would immediately frustrate the match. — On this account, Sir, I have carefully concealed the secret of my wishes, — and, on this account, I must still continue to conceal it. — My heart shall break before it shall be worthless ;  
— and



## 48 FALSE DELICACY :

— and I should detest myself for ever if I was capable of establishing my own peace at the expence of my benefactress's first wish, and the desire of her whole family.

CECIL.

Zounds, what can be the matter with my eyes! —

Miss MARCHMONT.

My life was mark'd out early by calamity, — and the first light I beheld was purchas'd with the loss of a mother. — The grave snatched away the best of fathers just as I came to know the value of such a blessing; — and had'nt it been for the exalted goodness of others, I, who once experienc'd the unspeakable pleasure of relieving the necessitous, had myself, perhaps, felt the immediate want of bread; — and shall I ungratefully sting the bosom which has thus benevolently cherished me? — Shall I basely wound the peace of those who have rescu'd me from despair, — and stab at their tranquility in the very moment they honour me with protection? — O, Mr. Cecil! they deserve every sacrifice which I can make. — May the benignant hand of Providence shower endless happiness upon their heads, and may the sweets of a still-encreasing felicity be their portion, whatever becomes of me!

CECIL.

Hortensia, — I can't stay with you. — My eyes are exceedingly painful of late; — what the devil can be the matter with them? — But, let me tell you before I go, that you shall be happy after all; — that you shall, I promise you; — but I see Lady Betty coming this way — and I cannot enter into explanations, — yet, do you hear, —  
don't

don't suppose I am angry with you for refusing my friend, — don't suppose such a thing, I charge you; — for he has too much pride to force himself upon any woman, and too much humanity to make any woman miserable. — He is besides a very foolish fellow, and it does'nt signify — [Exit.]

Enter L A D Y B E T T Y.

Lady B E T T Y.

Well, my dear Hortensia, I am come again to ask you what you think of Lord Winworth. — We were interrupted before, — and I want, as soon as possible, for the reason I hinted, to know your real opinion of him.

Miss MARCHMONT.

You have long known my real opinion of him, Lady Betty. — You know I always thought him a very amiable man.

Lady B E T T Y. [*with impatience.*]

Do you think him an amiable man?

Miss MARCHMONT.

The whole world thinks as I do in this respect, — yet, —

Lady B E T T Y.

Ay, she loves him, 'tis plain; and there is no hope after this declaration — [*aside.*] — His Lordship merits your good opinion, I assure you Miss Marchmont.

Miss MARCHMONT. [*aside.*]

Yes, I see by this ceremony that she is offended at my coolness to the proposal.

Lady B E T T Y.

I have hinted to you, Miss Marchmont, that my Lord requested I would exert my little interest with you in his favour.

H

Miss



50 FALSE DELICACY:

Miss MARCHMONT.

The little interest your Ladyship has with me,  
--- the little interest.

Lady BETTY.

Don't be displeased with me, my dear Hortensia, --- I know my interest with you is considerable.  
---I know you love me.

Miss MARCHMONT.

I would sacrifice my life for you, Lady Betty :  
For what had that life been without your generosity --- ?

Lady BETTY.

If you love me, Hortensia, never mention any thing of this nature.

Miss MARCHMONT.

You are too good. —

Lady BETTY.

But to my Lord Winworth. — He has earnestly requested I would become his advocate with you. — He has entirely got the better of his former attachments, and there can be no doubt of his making you an excellent husband.

Miss MARCHMONT.

His Lordship does me infinite honour, — nevertheless —

Lady BETTY. [*eagerly.*]

Nevertheless, what my dear ?

Miss MARCHMONT.

I say, notwithstanding, I think myself highly honour'd by his sentiments in my favour ; — 'tis utterly impossible for me to return his affection.

Lady

Lady BETTY. [*surprized.*]

Impossible for you to return his affection!

Miss MARCHMONT. [*aside.*]

I knew what an interest she wou'd take in this affair.

Lady BETTY.

And do you really say you can't give him a favourable answer? — How fortunate! [*aside.*]

Miss MARCHMONT.

I do, my dear Lady Betty, — I can honour, I can reverence him, — but I cannot feel that tenderness for his person which I imagine to be necessary both for his happiness and my own.

Lady BETTY.

Upon my word, my dear, you are extremely difficult in your choice, and if Lord Winworth is not capable of inspiring you with tenderness — I don't know who is likely to succeed; for, in my opinion, there is not a man in England possessed of more personal accomplishments.

Miss MARCHMONT.

And yet, great as these accomplishments are, my dear Lady Betty, they never excited your tenderness. —

Lady BETTY.

Why, all this is very true, my dear, — but, though I felt no tenderness, — yet I — to be sure, I — that is — I say, nevertheless. — This is beyond my hopes. [*aside.*]

Miss MARCHMONT. [*aside.*]

She's distress'd that I decline the proposal. — Her friendship for us both is generously warm. — and she imagines I am equally insensible to his merit, and my own interest.



52 FALSE DELICACY:

Lady BETTY.

Well, my dear, I see your emotion — and I heartily beg your pardon for saying so much. — I should be inexpressibly concern'd if I thought you made any sacrifice on this occasion to me. — My Lord, to be sure, possesses a very high place in my esteem, — but —

Miss MARCHMONT.

Dear Lady Betty, what can I do? — I see you are offended with me, — and yet —

Lady BETTY.

I offended with you, my dear! — far from it; I commend your resolution extremely, since my Lord is not a man to your taste. — Offended with you! why should I take the liberty to be offended with you? — A presumption of that nature —

Miss MARCHMONT.

Indeed, Lady Betty, this affair makes me very unhappy.

Lady BETTY.

Indeed, my dear, you talk very strangely; — so far from being sorry that you have refus'd my Lord — I am pleas'd, — infinitely pleas'd, — that is, since he was not agreeable to you. — Be satisfied your acceptance of him would have given me no pleasure in the world, — I assure you it wou'd'nt, — on the contrary, as matters are situated, I wou'd'nt for the world have you give him the smallest encouragement. [Exit.]

Miss MARCHMONT. [alone.]

I see she's greatly disappointed at my refusal of an offer so highly to my advantage, — I see, moreover, she's griev'd that his Lordship should meet

meet with a second repulse, and from a quarter too, where the generosity of his proposal might be reasonably expected to promise it success. — How surpriz'd she seem'd when I told her he cou'd'nt make an impression on my heart, and how eagerly she endeavour'd to convince me that she was pleas'd with my conduct; not considering that this very eagerness was a manifest proof of her dissatisfaction. — She is more interested in this affair than I even thought she would be, — and I should be completely miserable if she cou'd suspect me of ingratitude. — As she was so zealous for the match I was certainly to blame in declining it — 'Tis not yet, however, too late. — She has been a thousand parents to me, — and I will not regard my own wishes, when they are any way opposite to her inclinations. — Poor Mr. Cecil! — Make me happy after all! — How? — Impossible! — for I was born to nothing but misfortune. —

[Exit.]

*End of the third ACT.*

**ACT**



A C T IV.

SCENE *an Apartment at Lady BETTY's House.*

*Enter Lady BETTY and Mrs. HARLEY.*

Lady BETTY.

**T**HUS far, my dear Emmy, there is a gleam of hope. — She determined, positively determined, against my Lord: — And even suspected so little of my partiality for him, that she appeared under the greatest anxiety lest I should be offended with her refusing him: — And yet, shall I own my folly to you?

Mrs. HARLEY.

Pray do, my dear; — you'll scarcely believe it, — but I have follies of my own sometimes.

Lady BETTY.

Why you quite surprize me!

Mrs. HARLEY.

'Tis very true for all that. — But to your business.

Lady BETTY.

Why then, greatly as I dreaded her approbation of the proposal, — I was secretly hurt at her insensibility to the personal attractions of his Lordship.

Mrs. HARLEY.

I don't doubt, it my dear. — We think all the world should love what we are in love with ourselves.

Lady

Lady BETTY.

Your are right. — And though I was happy to find her resolution so agreeable to my wishes, my pride was not a little piqu'd to find it possible for her to refuse a man upon whom I had so ardently plac'd my own affection. — The surprize which I felt on this account threw a warmth into my expressions, and made the generous girl apprehensive that I was offended with her.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Well, this is a strange world we live in. — That a woman without a shilling shou'd refuse an Earl with a fine person, and a great estate is the most surprizing affair I ever heard of. — Perhaps, Lady Betty, my Lord may take it in his head to go round the family: — If he should, my turn is next, and, I assure you, he shall meet with a very different reception.

Lady BETTY.

Then you wou'd'nt be cruel, Emmy!

Mrs. HARLEY.

Why no! — Not very cruel. — I might give myself a few airs at first. — I might blush a little, and look down. — Wonder what he cou'd find in me to attract his attention: — Then pulling up my head, with a toss of disdain, — desire him, if ever he spoke to me on that subject again, —

Lady BETTY.

Well!

Mrs. HARLEY.

To have a licence in his pocket, -- that's all. — I would make sure work of it at once, and leave it to your elevated minds to deal in delicate absurdities. — But I have a little anecdote for you,  
which



56 FALSE DELICACY:

which proves beyond a doubt that you are as much as ever in possession of Lord Winworth's affection.

Lady BETTY.

What is it, my dear Emmy?

Mrs. HARLEY.

Why about an hour ago, my woman, it seems, and Arnold, my Lord's man, had a little conversation on this unexpected proposal to Miss Marchmont; in which Arnold said, — "Never tell me of your Miss Marchmonts, Mrs. Nelson; — between ourselves — but let it go no farther — Lady Betty is still the woman, and a sweet creature she is, that's the truth on't, but a little fantastical, and doesn't know her own mind —

Lady BETTY.

I'll assure you! — Why Mr. Arnold is a wit.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Well, but hear him out: — "Mrs. Nelson, I know as much of my Lord's mind as any body; let him marry whom he pleases, he'll never be rightly happy but with her Ladyship; and I'd give a hundred guineas, with all my soul, that it cou'd be a match." — These Nelson tells me were his very words. — Arnold is an intelligent fellow, and much in the confidence of his master.

Lady BETTY.

Indeed I always thought my Lord happy in so excellent a servant. — This intelligence is worth a world, my dear Emmy —

Enter Miss MARCHMONT.

Miss MARCHMONT.

I have been looking for your Ladyship.

Lady

Lady BETTY.

Have you any thing particular, my dear Hortensia? — But why that gloom upon your features? — What gives you uneasiness, my sweet girl? Speak, and make me happy by saying it is in my power to oblige you.

Miss MARCHMONT.

'Tis in your power, my dear Lady Betty, to oblige me highly — by forgiving the ungrateful disregard which I just now shew'd to your recommendation of Lord Winworth.

Mrs. HARLEY. [*aside.*]

Now will I be hang'd if she does not undo every thing by a fresh stroke of delicacy.

Lady BETTY.

My dear!

Miss MARCHMONT.

And by informing his Lordship that I am ready to pay a proper obedience to your commands.

Mrs. HARLEY. [*aside.*]

O the devil take this elevation of sentiment!

Lady BETTY.

A proper obedience to my commands my dear! I really don't understand you.

Miss MARCHMONT.

I see how generously you are concerned, for fear I shou'd, upon this occasion, offer violence to my inclination: — But, Lady Betty, I shou'd be infinitely more distress'd by the smallest act of ingratitude to you, than by any other misfortune. — I am therefore ready, in obedience to your wishes, to accept of his Lordship, and if I can't make him a fond wife, I will, at least, make him a dutiful one.

I

Mrs.



38 FALSE DELICACY:

Mrs. HARLEY. [*aside.*]

Now her delicacy is willing to be miserable.

Lady BETTY.

How cou'd you ever imagine, my dear Hortensia, that your rejection of Lord Winworth cou'd possibly give me the smallest offence? — I have a great regard for his Lordship 'tis true, but I have a great regard for you also; and wou'd by no means wish to see his happiness promoted at your expence; — think of him therefore no more, and be assur'd you oblige me in an infinitely higher degree by refusing than accepting him.

Miss MARCHMONT.

The more I see your Ladyship's tenderness and delicacy, the more I see it necessary to give an affirmative to Lord Winworth's proposal. — Your generosity must not get the better of my gratitude.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Did ever two fools plague one another so heartily with their delicacy and sentiment? — [*aside.*] Dear Lady Betty, why don't you deal candidly with her? —

Lady BETTY.

Her happiness makes it necessary now, and I will.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Ay, there's some sense in this. ---

Lady BETTY.

Your uncommon generosity, my dear Hortensia, has led you into an error —

Miss MARCHMONT.

Not in the least, Lady Betty.

Lady BETTY.

Still, Hortensia, you are running into very great mistakes. — My esteem for Lord Winworth, let me now tell you —

*Enter*

*Enter* WINWORTH.

WINWORTH.

Ladies, your most obedient! — As I enter'd, Lady Betty, I heard you pronounce my name: — May I presume to ask, if you were talking to Miss Marchmont on the business I took the liberty of communicating to you this morning?

Mrs. HARLEY. [*aside.*]

Ay, now it's all over I see.

Lady BETTY.

Why, to be candid, my Lord, I have mentioned your proposal —

WINWORTH.

Well, my dear Miss Marchmont, and may I flatter myself that Lady Betty's interposition will induce you to be propitious to my hopes? — The heart now offer'd to you, Madam, is a grateful one, and will retain an eternal sense of your goodness. — Speak, therefore, my dear Miss Marchmont, and kindly say you condescend to accept it.

Mrs. HARLEY, [*aside.*]

So—here will be a comfortable piece of work. — I'll e'en retire and leave them to the consequences of their ridiculous delicacy. [*Exit.*]

Miss MARCHMONT.

I know not what to say, my Lord, — you have honoured me, greatly honoured me — but Lady Betty will acquaint you with my determination. —

Lady BETTY.

I acquaint him my dear—surely you are yourself the most proper to—I shall run distracted—[*aside*]



60 FALSE DELICACY:

Miss MARCHMONT.

Indeed madam I can't speak to his lordship on this subject.

Lady BETTY.

And I assure you, Hortensia, 'tis a subject upon which I do not chuse to enter.

Lord WINWORTH.

If you had a kind answer from Miss Marchmont, Lady Betty, I am sure you would enter upon it readily: — But I see her reply very clearly in your reluctance to acquaint me with it.——

Miss MARCHMONT.

Why Madam will you force me to —

Lady BETTY.

And why Hortensia? — What am I going to say? — [*aside.*]

Lord WINWORTH.

Don't, my dear Ladies, suffer me to distress you any longer, — to your friendship, Madam, I am as much indebted [*addressing himself to Lady Betty.*] as if I had been successful, — and I sincerely wish Miss Marchmont that happiness with a more deserving man, which I find it impossible for her to confer on me. [*going.*]

Lady BETTY. [*aside.*]

Now I have some hope.——

Miss MARCHMONT.

My Lord I entreat your stay. ——

Lady BETTY.

Don't call his Lordship back my dear, it will have an odd appearance.

*Enter*

A C O M E D Y. 61

*Enter* Lord WINWORTH.

Miss MARCHMONT.

He is come back. — And I must tell him what your unwillingness to influence my inclinations, makes you decline.

Lord WINWORTH.

Your commands Madam. —

Lady BETTY. [*aside.*]

Now I am undone again !

Miss MARCHMONT.

I am in such a situation my Lord that I can scarcely proceed — Lady Betty is cruelly kind to me — but as I know her wishes —

Lady BETTY.

My wishes, Miss Marchmont! — indeed my dear there is such a mistake. —

Miss MARCHMONT.

There is no mistaking your Ladyship's goodness, you are fearful to direct my resolution, and I should be unkind to distress your friendship any longer.

Lady BETTY.

You do distress me indeed Miss Marchmont.

[*half aside and sighing.*]

Lord WINWORTH.

I am all expectation, Madam! —

Miss MARCHMONT.

I am compell'd by gratitude to both, and from affection to my dear Lady Betty, to break through the common forms impos'd on our sex, and to declare that I have no will but her Ladyship's.

Lady BETTY.

This is so provoking.

[*aside.*]

Lord



62 FALSE DELICACY:

LORD WINWORTH.

Ten thousand thanks for this condescending goodness, Madam — a goodness which is additionally dear to me, as the result of your determination is pronounc'd by your own lips.

MISS MARCHMONT.

Well, Lady Betty, I hope I have answer'd your wishes now.

LADY BETTY.

You cannot conceive how sensibly I am touch'd with your behaviour my dear. *[sighs.]*

MISS MARCHMONT.

You feel too much for me Lady Betty. —

LADY BETTY.

Why I do feel something my dear — this unexpected event has fill'd my heart — and I am a little agitated. — But come, my dear, let us now go to the company.

MISS MARCHMONT.

How generously, Madam, do you interest yourself for my welfare!

LORD WINWORTH.

And for the welfare of all her friends:

LADY BETTY.

Your Lordship is too good. —

LORD WINWORTH.

But the business of her life is to promote the happiness of others, and she is constantly rewarded in the exercise of her own benignity.

LADY BETTY.

You can't imagine how I am rewarded upon the present occasion I assure your Lordship.

*[Exeunt.]*

SCENE

SCENE *the Paddock behind Lady BETTY's Garden.*

*Enter Miss RIVERS and SALLY.*

SALLY.

Dear Madam don't terrify yourself with such gloomy reflections.

Miss RIVERS.

O, Sally, you can't conceive my distress in this critical situation. — An elopement even from a tyrannical father, has something in it which must shock a delicate mind. — But when a woman flies from the protection of a parent, who merits the utmost return of her affection, she must be insensible indeed, if she does not feel the sincerest regret: — If he should not forgive me! —

SALLY.

Dear Madam he must forgive you — are not you his child. —

Miss RIVERS.

And therefore I should not disoblige him. — I am half distracted, — and I almost repent the promise I gave Sir Harry --- when I consider how much my character may be lessened by this step, and recollect how it is likely to affect my unfortunate father. ---

SALLY.

But I wonder where Sir Harry can be all this time. ---

Miss RIVERS.

I wish he was come. ---

SALLY.

Courage, Madam — I hear him coming.

Miss RIVERS.

It must be he, let's run and meet him. —

*Enter*



64 FALSE DELICACY:

*Enter RIVERS. Sally shrieks and runs off.*

MISS RIVERS.

My father!

RIVERS.

Yes, Theodora — your poor, abandoned, miserable father.

MISS RIVERS.

Oh! Sir! —

RIVERS.

Little, Theodora, did I imagine I shou'd ever have cause to lament the hour of your birth, and less did I imagine when you arrived at an age to be perfectly acquainted with your duty, you wou'd throw every sentiment of duty off. — In what, my dear, has your unhappy father been culpable, that you cannot bear his society any longer? — What has he done to forfeit either your esteem, or your affection? — From the moment of your birth to this unfortunate hour, he has laboured to promote your happiness. — But how has his solicitude on that account been rewarded? You now fly from these arms which have cherished you with so much tenderness, when gratitude, generosity and nature, should have twin'd me round your heart. —

MISS RIVERS.

Dear Sir!

RIVERS.

Look back, infatuated child, upon my whole conduct since your approach to maturity: Hav'n't I contracted my own enjoyments on purpose to enlarge yours, and watched your very looks to anticipate your inclinations? Have I ever, with the obstinacy of other fathers, been partial in favour of any man to whom you made the slightest objection. — Or have I ever shewn  
the

the least design of forcing your wishes to my own humour or caprice? On the contrary has'nt the engagement I have enter'd into been carried on seemingly with your own approbation. — And hav'n't you always appeared reconciled at least to a marriage with Mr. Sidney?

MISS RIVERS.

I am so asham'd of myself!

RIVERS.

How then, Theodora, have I merited a treatment of this nature? You have understanding, my dear, though you want filial affection, and my arguments must have weight with your reason, however my tranquility may be the object of your contempt. — I lov'd you, Theodora, with the warmest degree of paternal tenderness, and flatter'd myself the proofs I every day gave of that tenderness, had made my peace of mind a matter of some importance to my child. — But, alas! a paltry compliment from a coxcomb undoes the whole labour of my life; and the daughter whom I looked upon as the support of my declining years, betrays me in the unsuspecting hour of security, and rewards with her person, the assassin who slabs me to the heart. —

MISS RIVERS.

Hear me dear Sir, hear me —

RIVERS.

I do not come here, Theodora, to stop your flight, or put the smallest impediment in the way of your wishes. — Your person is your own, and I scorn to detain even my daughter by force, where she is not bound to me by inclination. — Since therefore neither duty nor discretion, a regard for my peace, nor a solicitude for your own wel-

K

fare,



## 66 FALSE DELICACY:

fare, are able to detain you, — go to this man, who has taught you to obliterate the sentiments of nature, and gain'd a ready way to your heart, by expressing a contempt for your father. — Go to him boldly, my child, and laugh at the pangs which tear this unhappy bosom. — Be uniformly culpable, nor add the baseness of a despicable flight to the unpardonable want of a filial affection. [Going]

MISS RIVERS.

I am the most miserable creature in the world. —

RIVERS. [Returns.]

One thing more, Theodora, — and then farewell for ever. — Though you come here to throw off the affection of a child, I will not quit this place, before I discharge the duty of a parent, even to a romantic extravagance, and provide for your welfare, while you plunge me into the most poignant of all distress. — In the doating hours of paternal blandishment, I have often promised you a fortune of twenty thousand pounds, whenever you chang'd your situation. — This promise was indeed made when I thought you incapable either of ingratitude, or dissimulation, — and when I fancied your person wou'd be given, where there was some reasonable prospect of your happiness. — But still it was a promise, and shall be faithfully discharged. — Here then in this pocket-book are notes for that sum. [MISS RIVERS *shows an unwillingness to receive the pocket-book.*] — Take it — but never see me more. — Banish my name eternally from your remembrance; — and when a little time shall remove me from a world, which your conduct has rendered insupportable, boast an additional title, my dear, to your husband's regard, by having shorten'd the life of your miserable father. —

[Exit.]

Enter

*Enter SALLY.*

SALLY.

What, Madam, is he gone?

Miss RIVERS.

How could I be such a monster — such an unnatural monster as ever to think of leaving him. — But come, Sally, let us go into the house. —

SALLY.

Go into the house, Madam! — Why are'nt we to go off with Sir Harry? —

Miss RIVERS.

This insensible creature has been my confident too! — O I shall eternally detest myself. —

*Enter Sir HARRY and CECIL.*

Sir HARRY.

I beg a thousand pardons, my dear Miss Rivers, for detaining you. — An unforeseen accident prevented me from being punctual, — but the carriage is now ready, and a few hours will whirl us to the summit of felicity. — My cousin Cecil is kindly here to assist us — and —

Miss RIVERS.

Sir Harry, I can never forsake my father. —

Sir HARRY.

Madam!

Miss RIVERS.

By some accident he discovered our design, and came to this spot, while I was trembling with expectation of your appearance. —

Sir HARRY.

Well, my dear creature? —



## 68 FALSE DELICACY:

MISS RIVERS.

Here, in a melancholy but resolute voice, he expatiated on the infamy of my intended flight, and mentioned my want of affection for him in terms that pierc'd my very soul: — Having done this, he took an abrupt leave, and, scorning to detain me by force, forsook me to the course of my own inclinations.

SIR HARRY.

Well, my angel, and since he has left you to follow your own inclinations, you will not, surely, hesitate to —

MISS RIVERS.

Sir Harry, unloose my hand; — the universe wou'd'nt bribe me now to go off with you. — O, Sir Harry! if you regarded your own peace you wou'd cease this importunity; — for is it possible that a woman can make a valuable wife, who has prov'd an unnatural daughter?

SIR HARRY.

But consider your own happiness, my dear Miss Rivers —

MISS RIVERS.

My own happiness, Sir Harry! — What a wretch must the woman be, who can dream of happiness while she wounds the bosom of a father!

CECIL.

What a noble girl! — I shall love her myself for her sense and her goodness.

SALLY, *aside*, to SIR HARRY.

She won't consent, I know, Sir Harry, — so, if the coach is at hand, it will be the best way to carry her off directly.

SIR HARRY.

Then, my dear Miss Rivers, there is no hope. —

MISS

Miss RIVERS.

Sir Harry, I must not hear you. — This parting is a kind of death —

Sir HARRY.

Part, Madam! — by all that's gracious we must not part. — My whole soul is unalterably fix'd upon you, — and since — neither tenderness for yourself, nor affection for me, persuade you to the only measure which can promote our mutual felicity, you must forgive the despair that forces you from hence, and commits a momentary disrespect to avoid a lasting unhappiness.

Miss RIVERS.

Hear me, Sir Harry — I conjure you hear me!

Sir HARRY.

Let me but remove you from this place, Madam, and I'll hear every thing. — Cecil, assist me.

Miss RIVERS.

O, Mr. Cecil, I rely upon your honour to save and protect me!

CECIL.

And it shall, Madam. — For shame kinsman, unhand the Lady!

Sir HARRY.

Unhand her, what do you mean Cecil?

CECIL.

What do I mean, I mean to protect the Lady. — What should a man of honour mean?

Miss RIVERS, *breaking from* Sir Harry.

Dear Mr. Cecil don't let him follow me

[*She runs off.*]

SALLY.



70 FALSE DELICACY:

SALLY, *following*.

I'll give her warning this moment, that's the short and the long of it. [Exit.]

Sir HARRY.

Mr. Cecil, this is no time for trifling, — Did'nt you come here to assist me in carrying the Lady off?

CECIL.

With her own inclinations, kinsman; — but as they are now on the other side of the question, so am I too. — You must not follow her Sir Harry —

Sir HARRY.

Zounds! but I will!

CECIL.

Zounds! but you shan't. — Look'ye, Harry, I came here to assist the purposes of a man of honour, not to abet the violence of a ruffian; — your friends of the world, your fashionable friends, may, if they please, support one another's vices, but I am a friend only to the virtues of a man; and where I sincerely esteem him, I always endeavour to make him honest in spite of his teeth.

Sir HARRY.

An injury like this! —

CECIL.

Harry! — Harry! — don't advance: — I am not to be terrified, you know, from the support of what is just; — and, though you may think it very brave to fight in the defence of a bad action, it will do but little credit either to your understanding or your humanity.

Sir HARRY.

Dear Cecil, there's no answering that. — Your Justice and your generosity overpower me; —  
You

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You have restored me to myself. — It was mean, it was unmanly, it was infamous to think of using force. — But I was distracted; — nay, I am distracted now, and must entirely rely upon your assistance to recover her.

CECIL.

As far as I can act with honesty, Harry, you may depend upon me; — but let me have no more violence, I beg of you.

Sir HARRY.

Don't mention it, Cecil, — I am heartily ashamed —

CECIL.

And I am heartily glad of it. —

Sir HARRY.

Pray let us go to my house and consult a little. — What a contemptible figure do I make! —

CECIL.

Why, pretty well, I think; but to be less so, put up your sword, Harry —

Sir HARRY.

She never can forgive me.

CECIL.

If she does, she will scarcely deserve to be forgiven herself.

Sir HARRY.

Don't, Cecil; 'tis ungenerous to be so hard upon me. — I own my faults, and you should encourage me, for every coxcomb has not so much modesty.

CECIL.

Why, so I will, Harry; for modesty, I see, as yet, sits upon you but very awkwardly. [*Exeunt.*]

*End of the fourth Act.*

A C T



## A C T V.

SCENE *an Apartment at Lady BETTY'S.**Enter RIVERS and SIDNEY.*

SIDNEY.

**I** AM deeply sensible of Miss Rivers's very great merit, Sir ; — but —

RIVERS.

But what, Sir, —

SIDNEY.

Hear me with temper, I beseech you, Colonel.

RIVERS.

Hear you with temper : — I don't know whether I shall be able to hear you with temper ; — but go on, Sir. —

SIDNEY.

Miss Rivers, independent of her very affluent fortune, Colonel, has beauty and merit which would make her alliance a very great honour to the first family in the kingdom. — But, notwithstanding my admiration of her beauty, and my reverence for her merit, I find it utterly impossible to profit either by her goodness, or your generosity.

RIVERS.

How is all this, Sir ! do you decline a marriage with my daughter ?

SIDNEY.

A marriage with Miss Rivers, Sir, was once the object of my highest ambition, and, had I been honoured with her hand, I should have studied to shew my sensibility of a blessing so invaluable ; — but, at that time, I did not suppose

pose my happiness to be incompatible with her's. — I am now convinced that is so, and it becomes me much better to give up my own hopes, than to offer the smallest violence to her inclinations.

RIVERS.

Death and hell, Sir! — what do you mean by this behaviour? — Shall I prefer your alliance to any man's in England? — Shall my daughter even express a readiness to marry you? — and shall you, after this, insolently tell me you don't choose to accept her? —

SIDNEY.

Dear Colonel, you totally misconceive my motive, — and, I am sure, upon reflexion, you will rather approve than condemn it — A man of common humanity, Sir, in a treaty of marriage, should consult the lady's wishes as well as his own, and, if he can't make her happy, he will scorn to make her miserable.

RIVERS.

Scorn to make her miserable! — why the fellow's mad, I believe. — Does'nt the girl absolutely consent to have you? — Would you have her drag you to the altar by force? — Would you have her fall at your feet, and beg of you, with tears, to pity one of the finest women, with one of the best fortunes, in England?

SIDNEY.

Your vehemence, Sir, prevents you from considering this matter in a proper light. — Miss Rivers is sufficiently unhappy in losing the man of her heart, but her distress must be greatly aggravated, if, in the moment she is most keenly sensible of this loss, she is compelled to marry another. — Besides, Colonel, I must have my feel-

L

ing



74 FALSE DELICACY.

ings too. — There is something shocking in a union with a woman whose affections we know to be alienated ; and 'tis difficult to say which is most entitled to contempt, he that stoops to accept of a pre-engaged mind, or he that puts up with a prostituted person.

RIVERS.

Mighty well, Sir, — mighty well ; but let me tell you, Mr. Sidney, — that under this specious appearance of generosity I can easily see your motive for this refusal of my daughter, — let me tell you I can easily see your motive, Sir, — and, let me tell you, that the person who is in possession of your affections shall no longer find an asylum in this house.

SIDNEY.

Colonel, if I had not been always accustomed to respect you, — and if I did not even consider this insult as a kind of compliment, I don't know how I should put up with it : as to your insinuation, you must be more explicit before I can understand you.

RIVERS.

Miss Marchmont, — Sir. — Do you understand me now, Sir ? If Miss Marchmont had not been in the case my daughter had not received this insult. — Sir Harry was right ; and had not I been ridiculously besotted with your hypocritical plausibility I might have seen it sooner, but your cousin shall know of your behaviour, and then, Sir, you shall answer me as a man.

SIDNEY.

Miss Marchmont, Colonel, is greatly above this illiberal reflexion ; as for myself, I shall be always ready to justify an action which I know to be

be right, though. I should be sorry ever to meet you but in the character of a friend. [Exit.]

RIVERS, [alone.]

Well! — well! — well! — but it doesn't signify, — it doesn't signify, — it doesn't signify. — I won't put myself in a passion about it. I won't put myself in a passion about it. I'll tear the fellow piece-meal. — Zounds! I don't know what I'll do. [Exit.]

Enter Mrs HARLEY and CECIL.

CECIL.

Why this is better and better.

Mrs. HARLEY.

What a violent passion he's in.

CECIL.

This is the very thing I could wish — 'twill advance a principal part of our project rarely — well is't Sidney a noble young fellow, and does't he richly deserve the regard which my poor little girl entertains for him?

Mrs. HARLEY.

Why really I think he does — but how secretly my Lady Sentimental carried matters — O I always said that your grave, reflecting, moralizing damsels — were a thousand times more susceptible of tender impressions than those lively open hearted girls who talk away at random, and seem ready to run off with every man that happens to fall into their company.

CECIL.

I don't know, widow, but there may be some truth in this, you see at least I have such a good opinion of a madcap, that you are the first person I have made acquainted with the secret.



76 FALSE DELICACY:

Mrs. HARLEY.

Well and hav'nt I returned the compliment by letting you into my design about Lady Betty and Lord Winworth?

CECIL.

What a ridiculous bustle is there here about delicacy and stuff—your people of refin'd sentiments are the most troublesome creatures in the world to deal with, and their friends must even commit a violence upon their nicety before they can condescend to study their own happiness:—But have you done as we concerted?

Mrs. HARLEY.

Yes, I have pretended to Lady Betty that my Lord desires to speak with her privately on business of the utmost importance; and I have told his Lordship that she wants to see him, to disclose a secret that must intirely break off the intended marriage with Miss Marchmont.

CECIL.

What an aukward figure they must make, each imagining that the other has desired the interview—and expecting every moment to be told something of consequence—but you have not given either the least hint of Hortensia's secret inclination for Sidney?

Mrs. HARLEY.

How could you possibly suppose such a thing?

CECIL.

Well, well, to your part of the business then, while I find out the Colonel and try what I can do with him for my rattle-pated Sir Harry.

Mrs. HARLEY.

O never doubt my assiduity in an affair of this nature.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter*

*Enter Lady BETTY, in another Apartment.*

Lady BETTY.

What can he want with me I wonder?—Speak with me again in private, and upon business of the utmost importance! he has spoken sufficiently to me already upon his business of importance to make me miserable for ever. — But the fault is my own, and I have nobody to blame but myself. — Bless me here he is.

*Enter WINWORTH.*

WINWORTH.

Madam your most devoted, I come in obedience to your commands to —

Lady BETTY.

My commands my Lord?

WINWORTH.

Yes, Madam, your message has alarm'd me prodigiously — and you cannot wonder if I am a little impatient for an explanation.

Lady BETTY.

Impatient for an explanation, my Lord.

WINWORTH.

Yes, Madam, the affair is of the nearest concern to my happiness, and the sooner you honour me with —

Lady BETTY.

Honour you, with what my Lord?

WINWORTH.

My dear Lady Betty this reserve is unkind, especially as you know how uneasy I must be till I hear from yourself —

Lady BETTY.

Really my Lord I am quite astonished — uneasy till you hear from myself — impatient for an explanation — I beg your Lordship will tell me what is the meaning of all this? WINWORTH,



78 FALSE DELICACY:

WINWORTH.

Surely, Madam, you cannot so suddenly change your kind intentions —

Lady BETTY.

My kind intentions, my Lord !

WINWORTH.

I would not, Madam, be too presuming, but, as I know your Ladyship's goodness, I flatter myself that —

Lady BETTY.

Your Lordship is all a mystery—I beg you will speak out --- for upon my word I don't understand these half sentences. —

WINWORTH.

Why, Madam, Mrs. Harley has told me.

Lady BETTY, [*with eagerness.*]

What has she told you, my Lord ?

WINWORTH.

She has told me of the secret, Madam, which you have to disclose, that must entirely break off my marriage with Miss Marchmont.

Lady BETTY.

Has she then betrayed my weakness? —

WINWORTH.

Madam, I hope you won't think your generous intentions in my favour a weakness, for be assur'd that the study of my whole life —

Lady BETTY.

I did not think that Mrs. Harley could be capable of such an action ; — but since she has told you of the only circumstance which I ever wish'd to be conceal'd, I cannot deny my partiality for your Lordship.

WINWORTH.

Madam —

Lady

Lady BETTY.

This secret was trusted with her, and her alone ; but though she has ungenerously discover'd it, her end will still be disappointed. I acknowledge that I prize your Lordship above all the world ; — but even to obtain you I will not be guilty of a baseness, nor promote my own happiness by any act of injustice to Miss Marchmont.

WINWORTH.

I am the most unfortunate man in the world ; — and does your Ladyship really honour me with any degree of a tender partiality ?

Lady BETTY.

This question is needless, my Lord, after what Mrs. Harley has acquainted you with.

WINWORTH.

Mrs. Harley, Madam, has not acquainted me with particulars of any nature ---

Lady BETTY.

No !

WINWORTH.

No. --- And happy as this discovery would have made me at any other time, it now distresses me beyond expression, since the engagements I have just enter'd into with Miss Marchmont put it wholly out of my power to receive any benefit from the knowledge of your sentiments. — O, Lady Betty, had you been generously candid when I solicited the blessing of your hand, how much had I been indebted to your goodness ; but now, think what my situation is, when, in the moment I am sensible of your regard, I must give you up for ever.

*Enter CECIL and Mrs. HARLEY from opposite Places.*

Mrs. HARLEY, [*repeating ludicrously.*]

“ Who can behold such beauty and be silent !

CECIL



88 FALSE DELICACY:

CECIL, [*in the same accent.*]

"Defire first taught us words. —

Mrs. HARLEY.

"Man, when created, wander'd up and down,

CECIL.

"Forlorn and silent as his vassal beasts ;

Mrs. HARLEY.

"But when a heav'n-born maid like you ap-  
"pear'd,

CECIL.

"Strange pleasure fill'd his eyes, and seiz'd his  
"heart,

Mrs. HARLEY.

"Unloos'd his tongue,

CECIL.

"And his first talk was love." [*Both, ha! ha! ha!*]

WINWORTH.

Pray, Mr. Cecil, what is the meaning of this  
whimsical behaviour?

Lady BETTY.

The nature of this conduct, Mrs. Harley, bears  
too strong a resemblance to a late dissingenuity, for  
me to wonder at.

Mrs. HARLEY.

What dissingenuity, my dear?

Lady BETTY.

Why, pray, Madam, what secret had I to  
disclose to his Lordship?

Mrs. HARLEY.

The secret which you have disclos'd, my dear, —  
[*courtseying.*]

CECIL.

I beg, my Lord, that we may'nt interrupt your  
heroics, "when, in the moment you are sensible  
" of

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“ of her regard, — you must give her up for  
“ ever.” — A very moving speech, Mrs. Harley,  
— I am sure it almost makes me cry to repeat it.

WINWORTH.

Mr. Cecil, listening is —

Mrs. HARLEY.

What are we going to have a quarrel? —

CECIL.

O, yes ! your lover is a mere nobody without  
a little bloodshed, two or three duels give a won-  
derful addition to his character.

Lady BETTY.

Why, what is the meaning of all this ?

CECIL.

You shall know in a moment, Madam, — so  
walk in, good people, — walk in, and see the  
most surprising pair of true lovers, who have too  
much sense to be wise, and too much delicacy to  
be happy.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Walk in, — walk in.

*Enter* RIVERS, Miss RIVER'S, Miss MARCH-  
MONT, Sir HARRY, and SIDNEY.

Lady BETTY.

O, Emmy ! is this behaving like a friend ?

Mrs. HARLEY.

Yes, and like a true friend, as you shall see  
presently. —

RIVERS.

My Lord, I give you joy, joy heartily. — We  
have been posted for some time under the direc-  
tion of Marshal Cecil, and General Harley, in the  
next room, who have acquainted us with every  
M thing ;



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thing; and I feel the sincerest satisfaction to think the perplexities of to-day have so fortunate a conclusion.

WINWORTH.

The perplexities of to-day are not yet concluded, Colonel.

Miss MARCHMONT.

O, Lady Betty, why wou'dn't you trust me with your secret? I have been the innocent cause of great uneasiness to you, and yet my conduct entirely proceeded from the greatness of my affection.

Lady BETTY.

I know it, my dear, — I know it well; — but were you to give up Lord Winworth this moment — be assured that I wou'dn't accept of any sacrifice made at the expence of your happiness.

CECIL.

At the Expence of her happiness! — O, is that all? — Come here master Soberfides [*to Sidney*] and come here, Madam Gravity [*to Miss Marchmont*] come here, I say, — I suppose, my Lord, I suppose, Lady Betty, that you already know from what very manly motives — Sidney, here, has declined the marriage with Miss Rivers?

WINWORTH.

I do, and though I lament the impossibility of a relation to the Colonel's family, I cannot but admire his behaviour on that occasion.

Lady BETTY.

And I think it extremely generous.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Come, Cecil, stand by a little, you shan't have the whole management of this discovery.

CECIL.

Did you ever see such a woman!

Mrs.

Mrs. HARLEY.

Well, my Lord and Lady Betty, since we have agreed thus far, you must know that Mr. Sidney's behaviour has produced more good consequences than you can imagine. — In the first place it has enabled Colonel Rivers, without a breach of his word, —

CECIL.

To give his daughter to my foolish kinsman.

Mrs. HARLEY.

You want hold your tongue.

CECIL.

And, in the next place, it has enabled Mr. Sidney —

Mrs. HARLEY.

To marry Miss Marchmont.

CECIL.

Ay, she will have the last word. — For it seems that between these two turtles there has long subsisted —

Mrs. HARLEY.

A very tender affection, —

CECIL.

The devil's in her tongue, — she has the speed of me.

WINWORTH.

What an unexpected felicity?

Lady BETTY.

I am all amazement!

RIVERS.

Well, well, my dear sister, — no wondering about it, — at a more convenient time you shall know particulars; for the present let me tell you, that now I am cool, and that matters have been properly



84 FALSE DELICACY:

perly explain'd to me, I am not only satisfied but charm'd with Mr. Sidney's behaviour, though it has prevented the first wish of my heart; and I hope that his Lordship and you, by consenting to his marriage with Miss Marchmont, will immediately remove every impediment in the way of your own happiness.

WINWORTH.

If my own happiness was not to be promoted by such a step, I should instantly give my consent; --- and therefore, my dear Miss Marchmont, if I have Lady Betty's approbation; and your own concurrence, I here bestow this hand upon as deserving a young man as any in the universe. --- This is the only attonement I can make for the uneasiness I have given you, and if your happiness is any way proportion'd to your merit, I need not wish you a greater share of felicity.

SIDNEY.

What shall I say, my Lord?

WINWORTH.

Say nothing, Charles, for if you only knew how exquisite a satisfaction I receive on this occasion, you would rather envy my feelings than think yourself under an obligation; --- and now, my dear Lady Betty, if I might presume ---

Lady BETTY.

That I may not be censur'd any longer, I here declare my hand your Lordship's whenever you think proper to demand it; for I am now convinc'd the greatest proof which a woman can give of her own worth, is to entertain an affection for a man of honour and understanding.

WINWORTH.

This goodness, Madam, is too great for acknowledgment.

Lady

Lady BETTY.

And now, my dear Theodora, let me congratulate with you: I rejoice that your inclinations are consulted in the most important circumstance of your life, and I am sure Sir Harry will not be wanting in gratitude for the partiality which you have shewn in his favour.

Miss RIVERS.

Dear Madam, you oblige me infinitely.

Sir HARRY.

And as for me, Lady Betty, it is so much my inclination to deserve the partiality with which Miss Rivers has honour'd me, as well as to repay the goodness of her family, that I shall have little merit in my gratitude to either; I have been wild, I have been inconsiderate, but I hope I never was despicable; and I flatter myself I shan't be wanting in acknowledgment only to those, who have laid me under the greatest of all obligations.

RIVERS.

Sir Harry, say no more: — My girl's repentance has been so noble, your Cousin Cecil's behaviour has been so generous, and I believe you, after all, to be a man of such principle; — that next to Sidney I don't know who I shou'd prefer to you for a son-in-law. — But you must think a little for the future, and remember that it is a poor excuse for playing the fool, to be possessed of a good understanding.

WINWORTH.

Well, there seems but one thing remaining undone: — I just now took the liberty of exercising a father's right over Miss Marchmont, by disposing of her hand, 'tis now necessary for me—

CECIL.



CECIL.

Hold, my Lord — I guess what you are about, but you shan't monopolize generosity I assure you: — I have a right to shew my friendship as well as your Lordship; so, after your kinsman's marriage, whatever you have a mind to do for him shall be equalled, on my part, for Miss Marchmont; guinea for guinea, as far as you will, and let's see who tires first in going through with it.

WINWORTH.

A noble challenge, and I accept it.

Lady BETTY.

No, there's no bearing this —

Miss MARCHMONT.

Speak to them, Mr. Sidney, for I cannot —

SIDNEY.

I wish I had words to declare my sense of this goodness.

RIVERS.

I didn't look upon myself as a very pitiful fellow; but I am strangely sunk in my own opinion since I have been a witness of this transaction.

CECIL.

Why what the devil is there in all this to wonder at? People of fortune often throw away thousands at the hazard table to make themselves miserable, and nobody ever accuses them of generosity.

WINWORTH.

Mr. Cecil is perfectly right, and he is the best manager of a fortune who is most attentive to the wants of the deserving.

Mrs.

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Mrs. HARLEY.

Why now all is as it shou'd be — all is as it shou'd be --- this is the triumph of good sense over delicacy. — I could cry for downright joy: — I wonder what ails me --- this is all my doing!

CECIL.

No, — part of it is mine, — and I think it extremely happy for your people of refin'd sentiments to have friends with a little common understanding.

RIVERS.

Sister, I always thought you a woman of sense.--

Mrs HARLEY.

Yes, she has been a long time intimate with me you know.

CECIL.

Well said, sauce-box.

Sir HARRY.

If this story was to be represented on the stage the poet would think it his duty to punish me for life, because I was once culpable.

WINWORTH.

That wou'd be very wrong. The stage shou'd be a school of morality; and the noblest of all lessons is the forgiveness of injuries.

RIVERS.

True, my Lord. — But the principal moral to be drawn from the transactions of to-day is, that those who generously labour for the happiness of others, will, sooner or later, arrive at happiness themselves.

F I N I S.



# EPILOGUE,

Written by DAVID GARRICK, Esq.  
Spoken by Mrs. DANCER.

**W**HEN with the comic muse a bard hath dealing,  
The traffic thrives, when there's a mutual feeling;  
Our author boasts, that well he chose his plan,  
False Modesty! — Himself, an Irishman.

As I'm a woman, somewhat prone to satire,  
I'll prove it all a bull, what he calls nature;  
And you, I'm sure, will join before you go,  
To null False Modesty, — from Dublin ho!  
Where are these Lady Lambtons to be found?  
Not in these riper times, on English ground.  
Among the various flowers, which sweetly blow,  
To charm the eyes, at Almack's and Soho,  
Pray does that weed, False Delicacy, grow?

O, No. —  
Among the fair of fashion; common breeding,  
Is there one bosom, where love lies a bleeding?  
In olden times your grandams unres'd,  
Ty'd up the tongue, put padlocks on the mind;  
O, Ladies, thank your stars, there's nothing now confin'd,  
In love you English Men, — there's no concealing,  
Are most, like Winworth, simple in your dealing;  
But Britons, in their natures, as their names,  
Are different as the Shannon, Tweed, and Thames.

As the Tweed flows, the bonny Scot proceeds,  
Wands flow, and sure, and nae obstruction needs;  
Though oft repuls'd, his purpose still hands fast,  
Sticks like a burn, and wounds the Lads at last.  
The Shannon, rough and vigorous, pours along,  
Like the bold accents of brave Paddy's tongue:

Arrah, dear creature — can you scorn me so?  
Cast your sweet eyes upon me, top and toe!

Nat'ly, me? — Pooh! — that's all game and laughter;  
First marry me, my jewel — ho! — you'll love me after,  
Like his own Thames, honest John Trot, their brother,  
More quick than one, and much less bold than t'other,

Gentle not dull, his loving arms will spread;  
But soft — in willows hides his bashful head;

John leaves his home, resolv'd to tell his pain;  
Hesitates — I — love — fye, Sir — 'tis in vain,

John blushes, turns him round, and whistles home again.  
Well! is my painting like? — Or do you doubt it? —

What say you to a trial? — I t's about it.

Let Cupid lead three Britons to the field,  
And try which first can make a damsel's eld;

What say you to a widow? — Smile consent,  
And she'll be ready for experiment.





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